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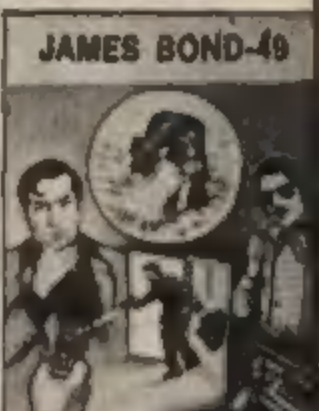
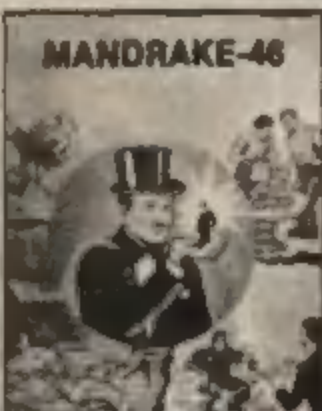
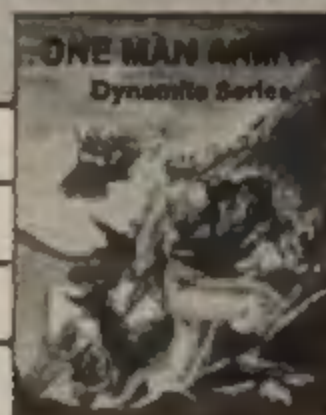
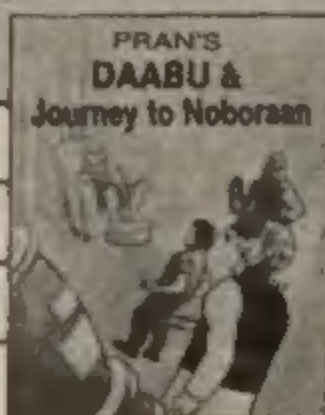
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SAGA OF ASHOKA THE GREAT: King Vindusara of Magadha is critically ill. Any moment his end may come. Who should succeed him to the throne? The eldest prince Sushima or the ablest prince Ashoka? Both are away from the capital, Pataliputra. One who reaches the capital first may be crowned the king. What happens? The fate of the princes shall be decided and the nation's destiny also.

ASTIKA: The sage who saved the species of serpents from total destruction!

MAHABHARATA: At their hermitage in the forest, the Pandava princes, discuss with the brahmins how they should go about to cross the last hurdle—one year's exile in hiding. The brahmins praise the Pandavas for remaining undaunted despite privations and ridicule at the hands of their cousins, the Kauravas. After the brahmins depart, Yudhishtira asks Arjuna where they should spend the thirteenth year in hiding. Arjuna suggests the Matsya kingdom of Virata, who has been a firm ally of the Pandavas. All five of them decide to enter the service of Virata in one capacity or another. Draupadi says she would be the queen's maid.

IMMORTAL FRIENDSHIP races to its nail-biting finish, while **COASTAL JOURNEYS** takes you along the east coast, and **GOLDEN HOUR** offers more and more leisure-time fun.





Founder: CHAKRAPANI

Controlling Editor : NAGI REDDI

Politicising school elections

In good old days, classes had a 'monitor' each, while the school had a leader or a 'prefect'—perhaps a legacy of the British system of education. It was left to the class teacher to decide who would be the monitor for the whole academic year or for a part of the year. The monitor had specific duties allotted to him or her. Children used to vie with each other in getting into the good books of the teacher to be chosen as the monitor.

The selection of the school prefect was the prerogative of the members of the staff who would recommend a name—invariably that of a senior student—to the headmaster or principal. The post of the 'student leader' was a coveted one.

The system used to work well, probably because the strength of the schools was limited in those days. Nowadays, schools are not few which boast of a strength of 2,000 or 3,000 plus. Small wonder, therefore, these schools agreed to the formation of students unions with elected officials like President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and others.

And that's why and where political parties got interested in students unions and prompted them to conduct elections on party basis which, in no time, vitiated the otherwise peaceful atmosphere in educational institutions—schools, colleges, and universities.

Parents are now coming forward with a demand that political parties be requested not to intervene in or interfere with elections among students. They have no doubt in their mind that they send their children *to study and not to play politics*. On the face of it, a just demand.



THE GHOST OF HIS MASTER

Ranganath, the landlord of Rajpura, was well known for his hospitality. Being a fertile land, Rajpura drew a lot of people from nearby areas to work in the fields. And Ranganath used to invite all of them to his house and give them food. He treated them all as equals, without discriminating between labourers and landlords, the rich and the poor.

One day a wealthy man, Shivkumar of Shivpuri, was passing through Rajpura. As it was quite dark, he thought it might not be safe to proceed any further. He stopped his vehicle and asked the cart-driver to go and enquire whether there was any rest-house where he could stay for the night.

The cart-driver was told that there was no such rest-house in Rajpura. "We don't need one," said the passer-

by. "Whoever comes here is the guest of landlord Ranganath. Haven't you heard of his hospitality? He welcomes everyone to his house and fetes them."

Shivkumar overheard the conversation and asked the driver to take him to Ranganath. Soon they reached the house, but found the door shut. However, there was a chair on the verandah. Shivkumar went and sat on it. It took some time for someone to come out and Shivkumar sat there impatiently. "Are you the landlord, Ranganath?" he asked the person who had opened the door. "I was told that you provide shelter to anyone who came to your house and offer them food. Is that true?"

Shivkumar did not wait for an answer. He continued in an overbearing tone: "I'm a rich man and I'm hungry after a long journey; so I



must have some food immediately. It must be specially prepared. The rice must be boiled properly, but it should not be overcooked. There must be one main dish and two side dishes. I must also have *papad*, curd, and lime pickle. I'm ready to pay for all that."

Ranganath was fretting and fuming while he listened to all these instructions. "Hunger is the same for everybody, don't you think so?" he said calmly. "Could there be a difference between a rich man's hunger and that of a poor man? The food I give here is the same for both the rich and the poor. You and your cartman will sit together and eat the same food. And you don't have to pay any money for that food. I consider it as a service."

Shivkumar felt ashamed. He got up and, with folded hands and in all humility, said, "Sir, please forgive me. You're really a great person. My cartman and I shall sit together and partake of whatever food you give."

After eating, Shivkumar retired and slept well. In the morning, he took leave of Ranganath and got into his vehicle. The driver drove for a while, and stopped the cart on the bank of a river. He got out of the cart and suddenly began attacking his master, who sustained injuries all over. The cartman dragged him to the river and pushed him into the flowing water.

The cartman then took hold of the money Shivkumar had carried with



him and proceeded to a nearby town, Kuntapur, where he started a business. In no time he became a rich man.

The former cart driver used to be smitten with a guilty conscience. He was cruel to his master and had also cheated him of his money. He wanted to make amends so that he would get some peace of mind. Every day he gave food to two poor persons, hoping that his act would mitigate his crime.

The restless soul of Shivkumar turned into a ghost which went after the cart-driver. It was surprised to see the palatial house he had built for himself. Little wonder that the ghost was angry with the erstwhile cartman. It hovered around the building. Soon the cartman came out and got into his



vehicle. Without his knowledge, the ghost also joined him in the vehicle, which proceeded to the local zamindar's bungalow, where a public debate was about to start. The subject of discussion was: Do ghosts exist or not?

The debate was lively. Suddenly, the ghost entered the body of the driver-turned-rich man, who then began to say: "Who says there are no ghosts? Here, I've caught hold of a ghost. Who can separate it from me? Come on, it's a challenge!" The former cart driver was shrieking when he said all that.

At first everybody was amused. Soon, they realised that the man was under some spell. The audience doubted whether they were not really in the company of a real ghost! And there was no stopping the man, who continued to shriek and shout. They sent for a sorcerer, who began questioning him. Soon everything was clear from what the ghost uttered -

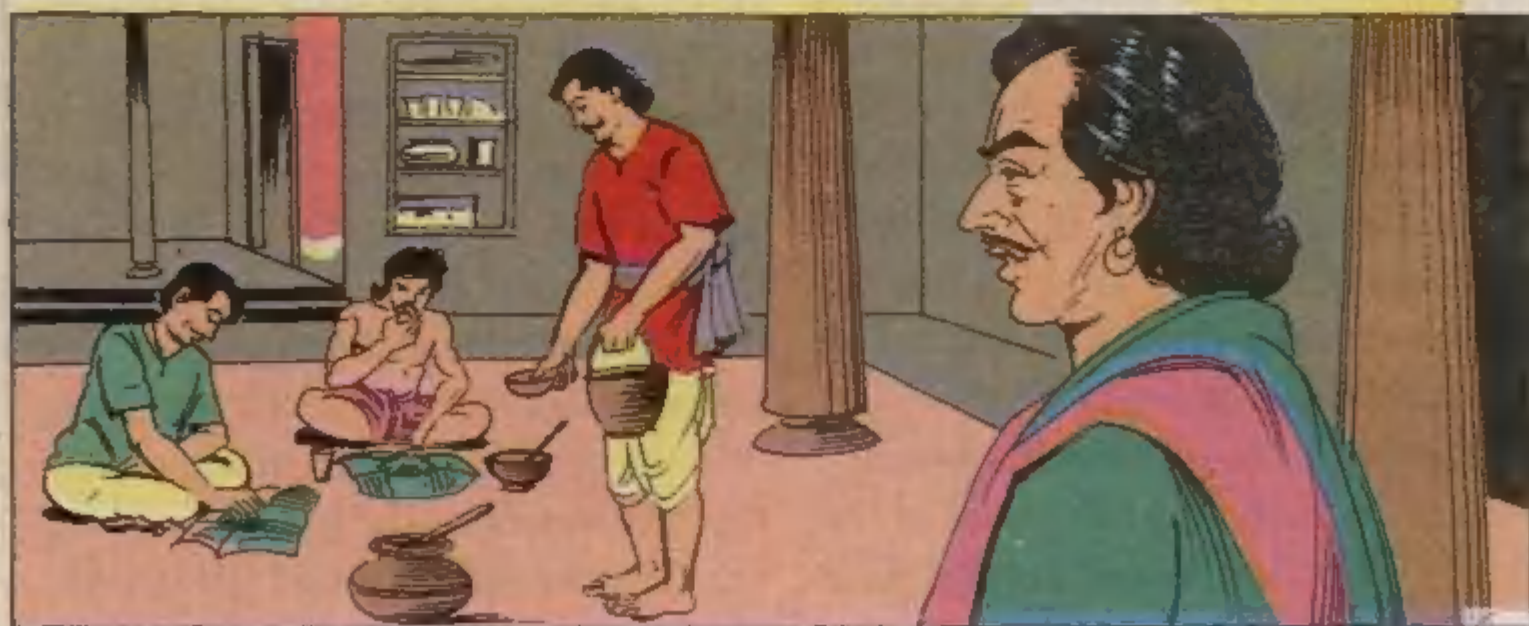
that he was Shivkumar who had been brutally done away with by his cartman, and that he had turned a rich man by stealing his money. Finally, the ghost told the sorcerer: "Sent for Ranganath who had given food to me and my cart driver."

When Ranganath came, the ghost paid his obeisance and said, "Sir, you alone will be able to save me!"

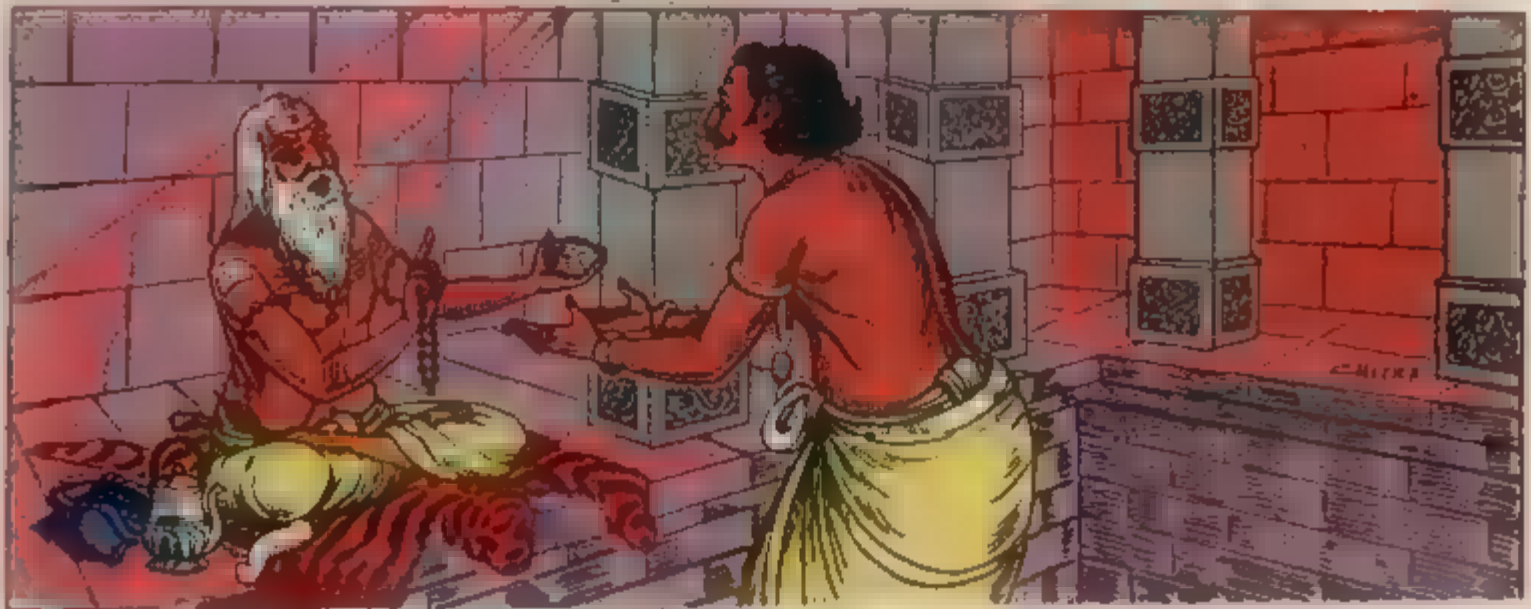
"I'm not such a blessed person to offer blessings to others," said Ranganath, with all modesty. "My only aim is to serve others and derive joy from it. You may leave the cartman as he appears to be full of remorse."

"You're very kind!" remarked the ghost. "I shall leave his body and go away."

In the next few moments, the cartman got up as if from a swoon and felt ashamed of himself in the presence of the gathering. He went along with Ranganath and, after handing over all his properties to him, he remained serving the landlord.



A difficult choice



Once in many years a sage visited the village Shyamkhal. The villagers had great trust in his goodwill and power. They met him with their problems and got his blessings.

The nobleman Kantiverma's problem was, he was childless. The sage gave him a cupful of milk. "Ask your wife to drink this at one go. I'm sure, your wish will be fulfilled," said the sage.

Kantiverma handed over the cup to his wife and told her what she should do. She went into her family sanctuary, bowed to the deity and drank up the milk. But she did that in two gulps.

In due course she gave birth to twins. They grew up to be beautiful girls, but each of them was weak in one leg and could never walk fast, not to speak of running.

If Kantiverma and his wife were

sad because they had no children, they were sad now because of the physical defect of their otherwise charming daughters.

Years later the sage camped in the village once again. Kantiverma reported to him the condition of his daughters and prayed to him to make them normal.

The sage closed his eyes and meditated for few moments. "Your wife drank the milk in two gulps instead of one. That explains the situation," he said. After a while he picked up a banana, meditated on it for a while, and gave it to him. "Do not divide it. Give the whole banana to anyone of your choice—but to only one," he said and waved his hands, indicating that he was not willing to talk on the issue any further.

Kantiverma was in a dilemma. He understood that whoever ate the fruit

would be cured of her defect. But how could he give it to one depriving the other? He was in deep anguish while walking towards his home.

Suddenly he heard ■ suppressed cry. Near a well sat a young lady, crying. A young man was trying to console her. When the young man saw Kantiverma, he came running to him. They knew each other.

"Sir, everybody respects you. Will you mind telling my wife how wrong it is to commit suicide? She would have jumped into this well had I not reached on the spot in time to stop her," said the young man wiping his own tears.

Kantiverma understood that the young lady suffered from ■ partial paralysis. Her husband was required to do all the household chores and also go to his place of work. It had been a hard life for him. The lady felt awfully bad that she was ■ burden on

him. That was why she wanted to end her life.

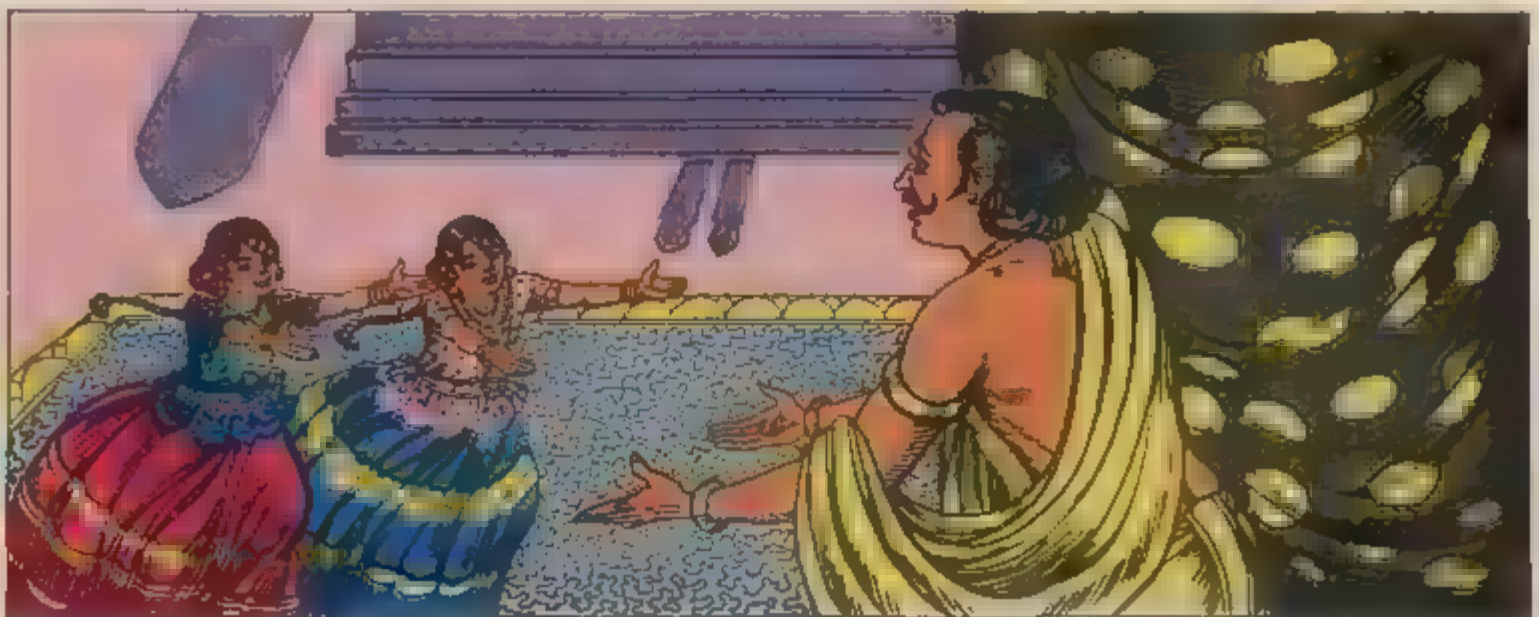
Kantiverma was deeply moved by pity. "My daughter, come on, eat this banana. Do as I say and wait," he said, giving the fruit to the lady.

She ate it. Within a minute a strange change came over her. She shed tears again—but they were tears of joy and gratitude. The numbness of her limbs had vanished!

Kantiverma was happy. He told himself—she deserved it more than any of my daughters. In any case, it would have been impossible for him to decide which of his daughters should eat the fruit!

But a far greater happiness awaited him. As he entered his house, his daughters came running towards him. They were no more lame!

Kantiverma embraced them, tears flooding his cheeks in gratitude for the sage. The sage knew how the miracle was to work!



A WINDOW ON THE WORLD

India and the CTBT

Early in September, the U.N. General Assembly held a special session to approve of the draft of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, or CTBT — it is commonly called. The draft resulted from the June Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which discussed it but did not accept it unanimously. India was among the few nations which opposed the draft. At the General Assembly, Australia moved

■ resolution that the draft of the Treaty be adopted. On September 10, the resolution ■ passed by an overwhelming majority, with 158 of the 185 member-nations favouring it, with India, Bhutan, and Libya voting against it. There were five abstentions and the rest remained neutral.

What is India's objection to the draft Treaty?

Five big nations in the world—the U.S.A. and U.K., Russia, China, and France—already possess nuclear weapons, while 44 nations have by now reached a state of nuclear capability: India is one of them. The U.N. General Assembly had asked the Geneva Conference on Disarmament to draft a Treaty which will have three objects: ONE, to prevent the making of any more nuclear weapons by any country; TWO, to persuade those countries which have ■ stockpile of weapons to destroy them

within ■ specified period; and THREE, to promote international peace, or to put it in simpler words, to create a state of affairs where no wars would be fought with nuclear weapons.

India felt that the draft does not meet any of these three objects. The five nuclear powers do not want another nation to build ■ bomb; at the same time, they are slow and hesitant about disarming themselves completely. They wish to retain at least a minimum number of nuclear weapons in their stockpile. India also pointed out that China and France have continued to test nuclear devices. Thus, the first object had been given the go by. Secondly, India thought

that the draft does not provide for ■ time frame for the destruction of the nuclear weapons held by the five powers. And, if these two objects are not being met, India doubted whether international peace is attainable ■ all.

The draft Treaty, passed by the General Assembly, will now wait for the signatures of all its member-nations during the next three years. India has made it clear that it will not sign the draft Treaty, and reiterated that ■ does not, however, mean that India proposes to build a nuclear device, though it has the required capability. India has not till now deviated from its path of using its nuclear capabilities exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Will India and other nations which do not sign the Treaty find themselves isolated in 1999? We will have to wait and see.



IMMORTAL FRIENDSHIP - 6

By BUJJA!

IN KING
PRACHANDA'S
PALACE ...

*Enough of your
drama!*



*Sumitra! Why have you
come back?*



*For Your sake—you who risked
his life for our sake!*



*I've nobody! But, you've your old
parents, and your pregnant wife!*



*Yes! She's delivered of
a son, I'm told!*



*O King! He has not even
his wife and son! Pray release
him!*



*All right! We shall release him, but
we'll hang you!*



*No, no! Please pun-
ish me, and release
Singi Dora!*



*So, you want to forsake your wife
and son, for his sake?*



Sumitra! You're a fool! Will you discard even your wife and son for my sake?



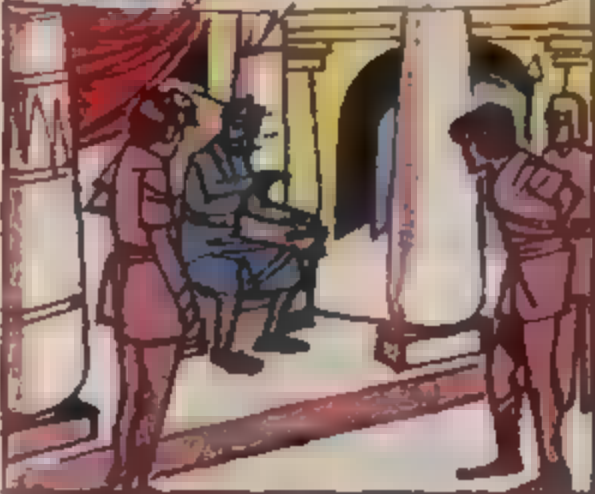
Both of them seem to be odd fellows!



O King! If you'll allow me seven days time, I shall go and see my wife and son, and come back! You may then release Singi Dora, and punish me!



All right! If you fail to return on the seventh day before sunset, your friend will be hanged!



Brother! Shall I go?

Please go, at once!



You're a fool, Singi! Do you believe your friend will return? Ha, ha, ha!



He'll certainly return! Do you know what friendship means sire?



Take this idiot away to our prison!



O King! Can't we get birds at one shot, Your Majesty, by killing Sumitra on the way?



**WHEN WE THINK WE FAIL, WE ARE
OFTEN NEAR SUCCESS**

No! Don't kill Sumitra now! I must see whether he comes back for the sake of this robber!



We must make this fool understand that everyone cares for his own life! If Sumitra were to return, then, both of them can be ...



SUMITRA'S WIFE IS OVERJOYED TO RECEIVE HIM



I prayed for you and prayed! Thank god, you've come back safely!



He looks just like you, doesn't he?

He looks like both of us!



FOUR OR FIVE DAYS PASS. SUMITRA IS MOODY, AND HIS WIFE NOTICES IT.



You look gloomy! Why?

Oh! Nothing



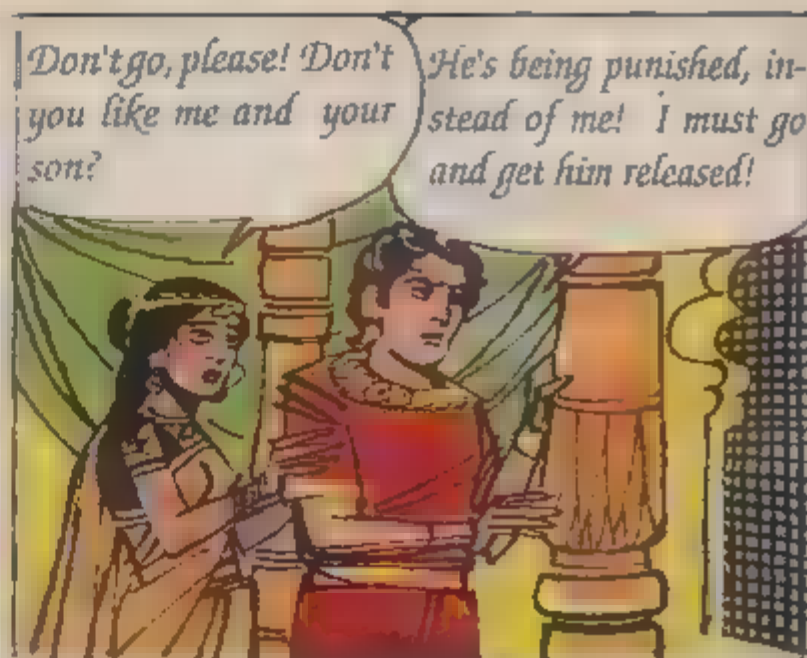
No! Something is worrying you! I must go back to Prachanda's Kingdom!



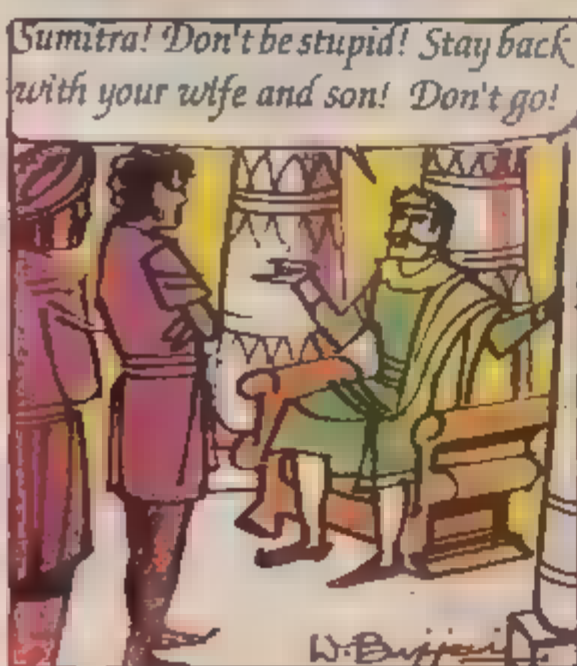
No, you shouldn't go! This time, I won't allow you!



LITTLE IS DONE WHEN EVERY MAN IS MASTER



SUMITRA'S WIFE PLEADS WITH KING VIJAY-
AKEERTHI



Duty bound, Sumitra starts for the enemy kingdom.



DO TO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD WISH THEM DO TO YOU

Warning: Don't play with fire!

★ *Is there any difference between "flammable" and "inflammable"? asks B. Khorpla, of Rajula City, Gujarat.*

Any substance that may be set on fire (like explosives) or that is easily kindled (like kerosene, petrol) is inflammable. The word 'flammable' means the same. The words originate from 'flame', which in other words is fire. Petrol and kerosene can by themselves ignite due to friction or heat. These days we often come across instances of explosives being set fire to by even remote control. Proper warnings are given while inflammable material is transported from one place to another.

★ *Reader Upendra Nath Sial, of Balasore, is confused about 'house' and 'home'.*

'House' denotes a building, with physical properties like a wall, gate, verandah or porch, main door, drawing or living room, dining room, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, etc, if not all of them, ■ least some. A house is where ■ family stays. The presence of a family makes a house ■ home. Consider these sentences: "I went back home" – "I did not find my friend in his house".

★ *What is meant by 'sphere of onfluence'? asks P.S. Sarat Chandra, of Hyderabad.*

First, there is no word like 'onfluence', which apparently has ■ spelling error. Each person, according to his or her vocation, profession, or achievements in particular fields, often enjoys some 'influence', which only means that he or she is recognised as an expert among that group, his or her views are appreciated ■ not fully accepted, and he or she is held in esteem by that specific group. We can say that the person wields influence in that particular sphere.

★ *Reader Krishna Ch. Behara, of Angul, wants to know which is correct: 'walking is good exercise' or 'walking is ■ good exercise'?*

Like 'playing is a good exercise', walking also is ■ good exercise. However, you may omit the indefinite article when you wish to say 'walking gives you good exercise'.

★ *What is the meaning of "lazybones"? asks A. Ratnakumar, of Dommeru.*

The expression simply means a lazy person or an idler, who probably does not wish to be active lest his limbs, bones, and muscles suffer fatigue!



SAGA OF ASHOKA THE GREAT

(The story so far: King Vindusara of Magadha has several sons. His favourite is Sushima, the eldest one. But Ashoka, who is the son of the king's Brahmin queen is far more brave. Ashoka is sent to Ujjain, as the Governor of Avanti. Sushima, awfully envious of Ashoka's fame and popularity, sends two dancing girls to murder him, while Ashoka is camping at Vidisha. The dancing girls would have succeeded but for the timely intervention of Vidisha Devi, a disciple of the celebrated Buddhist monk, Upagupta. The grateful Ashoka marries her.)

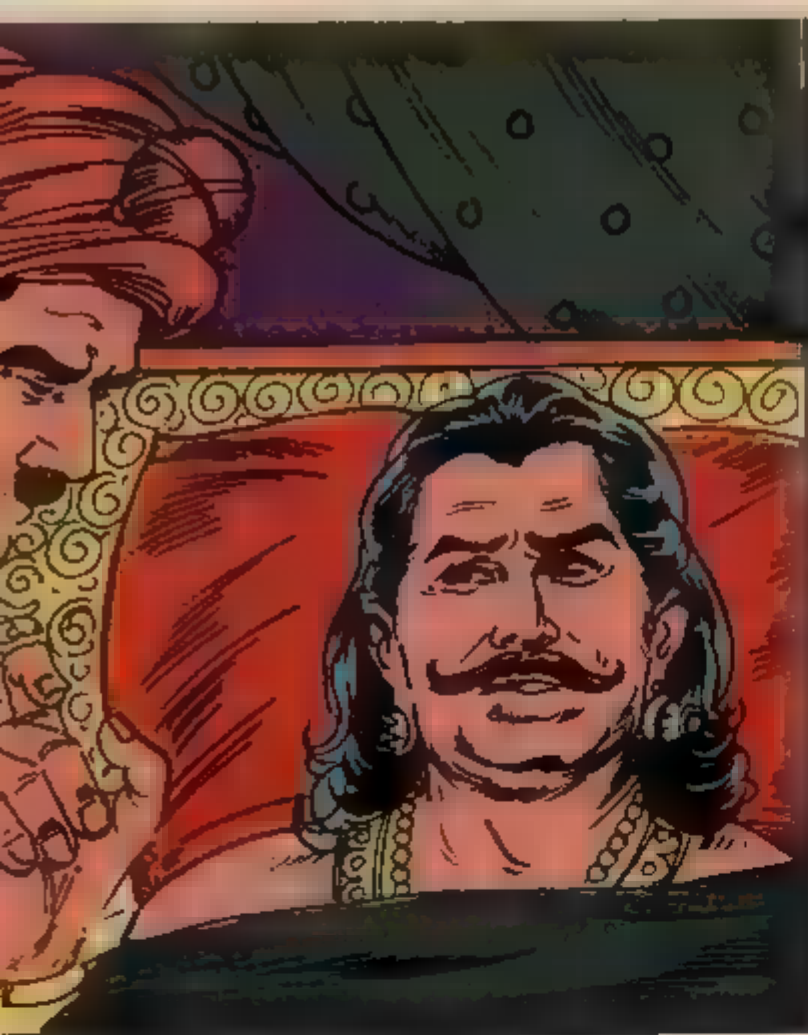
Ujjain, on the banks of the river Kshipra, was a lovely city. Ashoka won the hearts of the local chieftains, primarily through his wife Vidisha Devi's kind and compassionate conduct towards all. Five years passed, during which Vidisha Devi gave birth to a son and a daughter, Mahendra and Samghamitra.

Yasa, as Prince Ashoka's emissary, met King Vindusara, with reports regarding the affairs of Avanti.

"I've lost all my love for Ashoka.

How dare did he marry without my consent? Can any son, faithful and obedient to his father, do such a thing?" the king demanded.

"My lord, the very first thing my master Ashoka did after choosing his bride was to send messengers to you, praying for your permission and blessings. It is a puzzle to me to learn that the message never reached you," said Yasa humbly. He then narrated to the king how Vidisha Devi saved the prince and how noble



and worthy ■ wife Ashoka had been blessed with.

The king heard with patience. It looked ■ though he had already pardoned Ashoka.

The same day, in the evening, the king summoned his prime minister, Khallataka.

"My worthy minister, I'm afraid, I may not live long. It's almost ten years now that I've practically taken to bed. I'm disgusted with life myself. But, while I'm unwilling to live, I'm also afraid of dying. Can you guess the reason?" he asked.

"If I cannot, I'm hardly worthy of serving you" said the prime minister.

The king's face displayed ■ sad smile. "I shudder to think of the future

of the empire built by the great Chandragupta Maurya. Can Prince Sushima manage it? Shouldn't we call him back from Taxila? Isn't it important that the Crown Prince should be near the king when the latter is on his death-bed?" he asked in ■ weak voice.

"We all ■■ praying for your long life. But I agree that we should call Prince Sushima back," said the prime minister.

The king, this time, displayed even ■ sadder smile. "Is your ■■■■ to call him back the same ■ mine?" he asked.

The minister hemmed and hawed and cleared his throat.

"Your Majesty, you've already guessed what is in my mind. Even if you had not guessed it, I could not have kept anything hidden from you. Prince Sushima, unfortunately, has caused more harm to ■■ than the rebellion which he went to suppress. First of all, instead of confronting the rebels, he bribed their leaders and gave them high positions. They are ruthlessly exploiting the people. Whoever raises his voice against them is killed or imprisoned, with the support of the prince. Thus, the wicked is rewarded, the innocent is harassed. How long can this continue? My report is, another rebellion may break out any day. Secondly, the prince is wasting all his time in merriment in the company of flatterers. The ad-

ministration has gone to dogs," stated the minister.

"Such reports have reached me, but I thought them to be exaggerations!" said the king.

"They ■ not, I'm sorry to say."

"Do you mean to say that Sushima is not fit to succeed me to the throne?" asked the king gravely.

"Since you have put a straight question to me, I'm duty-bound to give an answer. He is not."

"Who then is?"

"My lord, to your straight question once again I have a straight answer and my answer is, Prince Ashoka. He has proved his merits in suppressing ■ rebellion ■ well as in ruling a large province of our empire."

The king did not respond to this question. It was obvious that he could

not contradict the minister; at the time he was not happy with his suggestion.

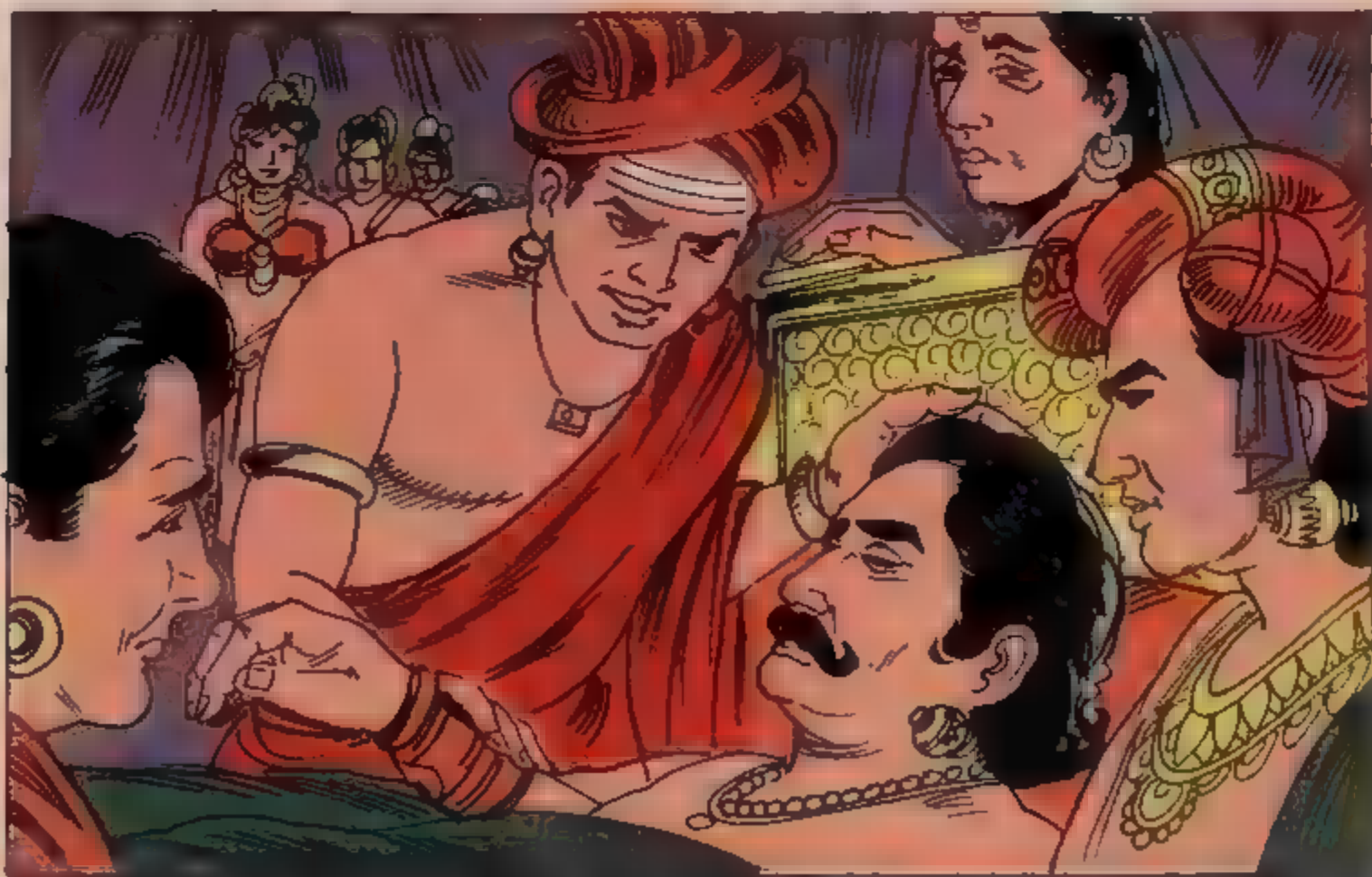
"Khallataka! Allow me some time ■ come to ■ decision. Whatever it is, it is perhaps going to be a painful one," the king said with a sigh.

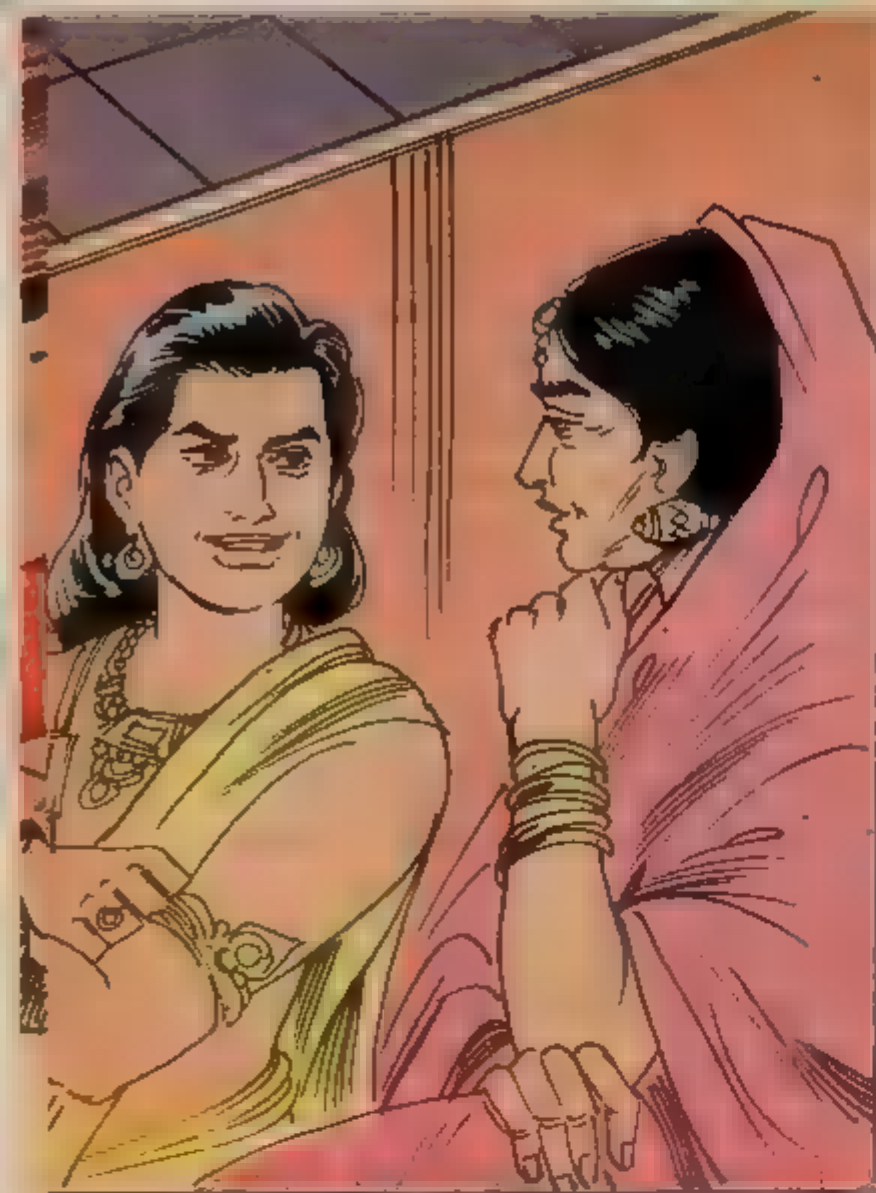
"Your Majesty! Relax. You'll take a proper decision in time!" said the prime minister while leaving the king's chamber.

Alas, time was fast running out. An hour later the prime minister was summoned again, this time ■ the behest of the chief queen. The king's physicians and the priest were near the king, along with the queen.

"Anything serious?" asked the prime minister.

"The king is seriously ill. In fact he fainted, after complaining of a severe pain in the chest."





"Prime Minister! We want you to summon our son, Crown Prince Sushima, immediately," said the queen in a firm voice.

"As you wish, Your Majesty," said Khallataka.

"Will you be able to send some riders forthwith?" asked the queen.

"Within an hour, O great queen!"

"Good. Let me prepare a personal message for our son. Let the messengers collect it from me, before setting out for Taxila," said the queen as she went out.

"Vaidyaraj, what do you see?" the prime minister asked the chief physician in a whisper.

"If the king can see the sunrise tomorrow, that will be a miracle!"

said the physician.

"If that's the case, you can imagine the crisis that is coming over all of us. Please continue to attend on your patient and do your best to save him and send for me if any help is needed," said the prime minister. He hinted to the chief priest to come out with him. At the door he saw an attendant and asked him to send the commander-in-chief of the army to the private counsel room adjacent to the court.

★ ★ ★

Yasa was talking to Queen Subhadra in her room.

"My son, it is now years since I have seen my son, Ashoka. How much I yearn to be with him!" said the queen, wiping her eyes.

"Mother, great will be your happiness to find a true daughter in your daughter-in-law, Vidisha Devi. She is like my younger sister. I have taught her and have taken her to task when she was a child, but in my heart I adore her like a goddess. Your grandson and grand-daughter are two little angels. With you joining them at Ujjain, it will be a happy family," said Yasa.

"I would love to go away with you, my son, but for the fact that the king is ill.."

The queen stopped, because the maid who was dearest to her signalled her to come out into the corridor. The queen asked Yasa to wait

and went out. When she returned after a moment, she was looking quite upset.

"My son," she told Yasa, her voice choking with emotion, "although they have kept it a secret, the king's condition is critical. In fact, he may not even survive the night."

"I see!" Yasa stood up.

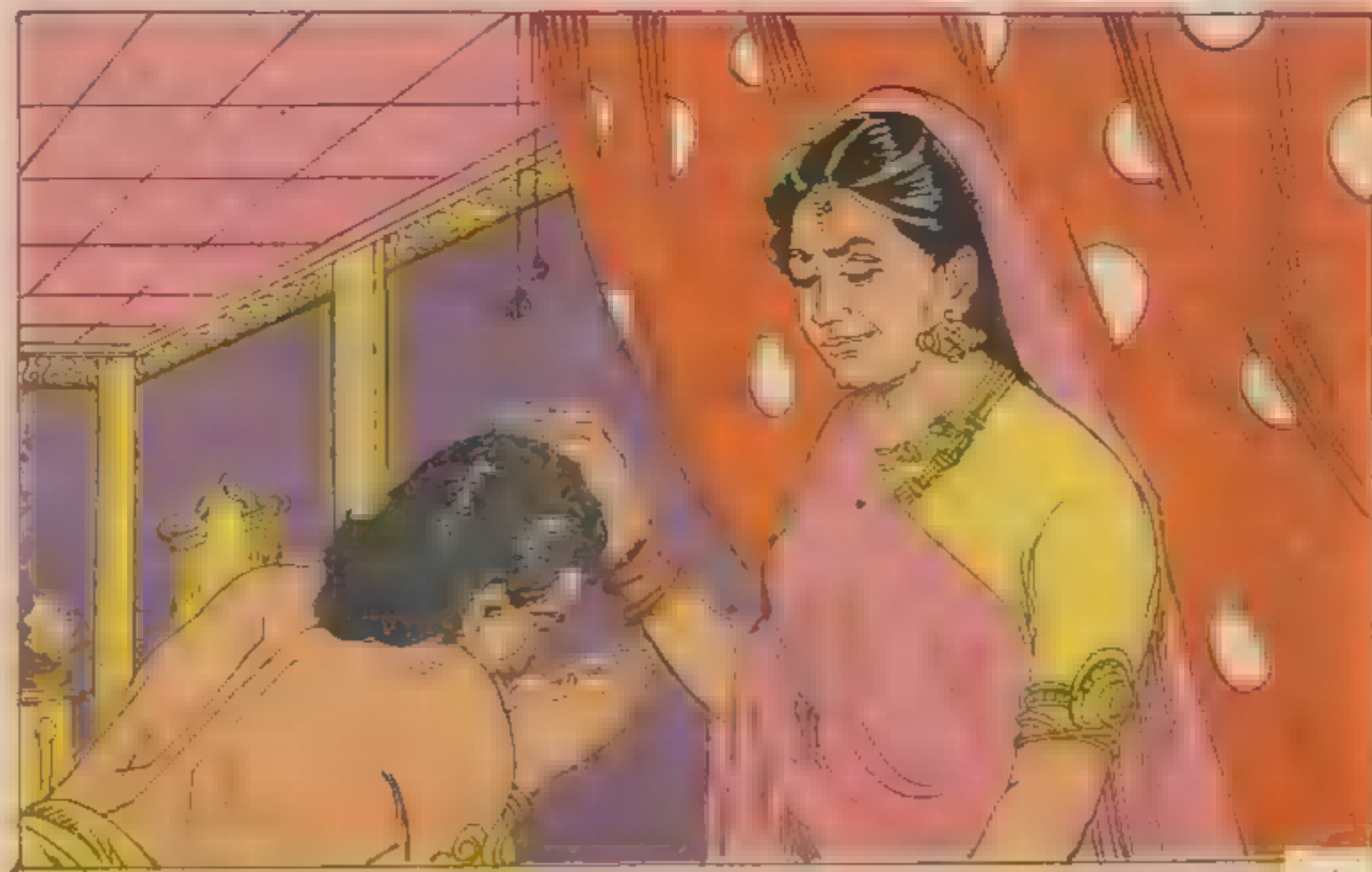
"Well, my son, God forbid, but if the king departs to the other world, this place will become a hell for me. The Crown Prince, Sushima, hates me even though I have nothing but a mother's love for him. His mother, the chief queen, cannot bear my sight, even though I have served her like ■ younger sister and ■ maid. Yasa, you must tarry here for a few days. If the worst happens, I will go away with you to Ujjain," said Queen Subhadra.

Yasa's face was growing stiff and bright. "Mother," he said, "you need not fear any humiliation. In fact, soon the day may come when the other queens must dread you and respect you -- as the mother of the king, yes, I mean King Ashoka!"

Queen Subhadra looked too shocked to say anything.

"Have patience, mother. Give your blessings and support to me. The time has come for me to act -- for the sake of your worthy son. The coming few days will decide the future of the empire. I've only one request. It may not be possible for me to meet you frequently. But please remain alert and whatever happens inside the palace, keep me informed about it through any of your trusted maids."

Yasa bowed to the queen and





hurried out.

★ ★ ★

Inside the private counsel room, the prime minister patted the general on the back and said, "I appreciate your frankness. Personally you would not like Sushima to occupy the throne, but as the commander-in-chief, you are duty-bound to support the Crown Prince in case there is a rivalry for the throne."

"That's right, my noble friend!"

"But so far as the crown of Magadha is concerned, the priest has a decisive role to play. Don't forget that the celebrated Chanakya, the guide of the founder of this dynasty, was first ■ priest and only then a minister," said the priest.

"What do you intend to say?" asked the general.

"I've studied the horoscopes of all the princes. Ashoka alone has ■ emperor's luck. Prince Sushima will cause devastation to the empire."

"Good. Spread this knowledge of yours among the nobles. They trust you. Your support for Ashoka will pave his way to the throne. I hope, you all realise that I've no special reason to favour Ashoka. My only concern is the empire."

"We know it!" said the general. "However, I'm obliged to despatch messengers to both Taxila and Ujjain, informing the two princes of the emergency. Much will depend on who arrives first."

★ ★ ★

"Much will depend on who arrives first!" Yasa told the two dancing girls in ■ half-lit room. They were the ones who had tried to kill Ashoka. Pardoned by him, they had remained ■ Vidisha Devi's maids and had lately come to Pataliputra.

"What do you expect us to do?" asked the girls.

"Well, I ask you to pay back your debt to Prince Ashoka. He pardoned you when any other man would have thrown you into the fire, alive, or skinned you alive," said Yasa.

"God of love came to our rescue! Had Prince Ashoka not fallen in love with Vidisha Devi — our saviour — we would have become only ■ distant

memory for you!" said one of the girls and the other one giggled.

"Now, tell us exactly what you would like us to do. Prince Sushima is under the impression that we were put to death by Prince Ashoka. At our sight he would start like seeing ghosts! That itself may kill him!"

"Nobody would regret if that happens. But, you should drive him into a condition where he cannot distinguish human beings from ghosts. That is to say, his arrival at Pataliputra must be delayed. Now, there's no time to lose. You are excellent riders, aren't you? I have kept two of the best horses and two escorts ready for you. You should be able to reach Taxila, through a short-cut which is known to your escorts, before the royal messengers reach him. They'll start tomorrow morning. You should start

tonight!"

"Tonight? O bad luck! It is drizzling!" said one of the girls.

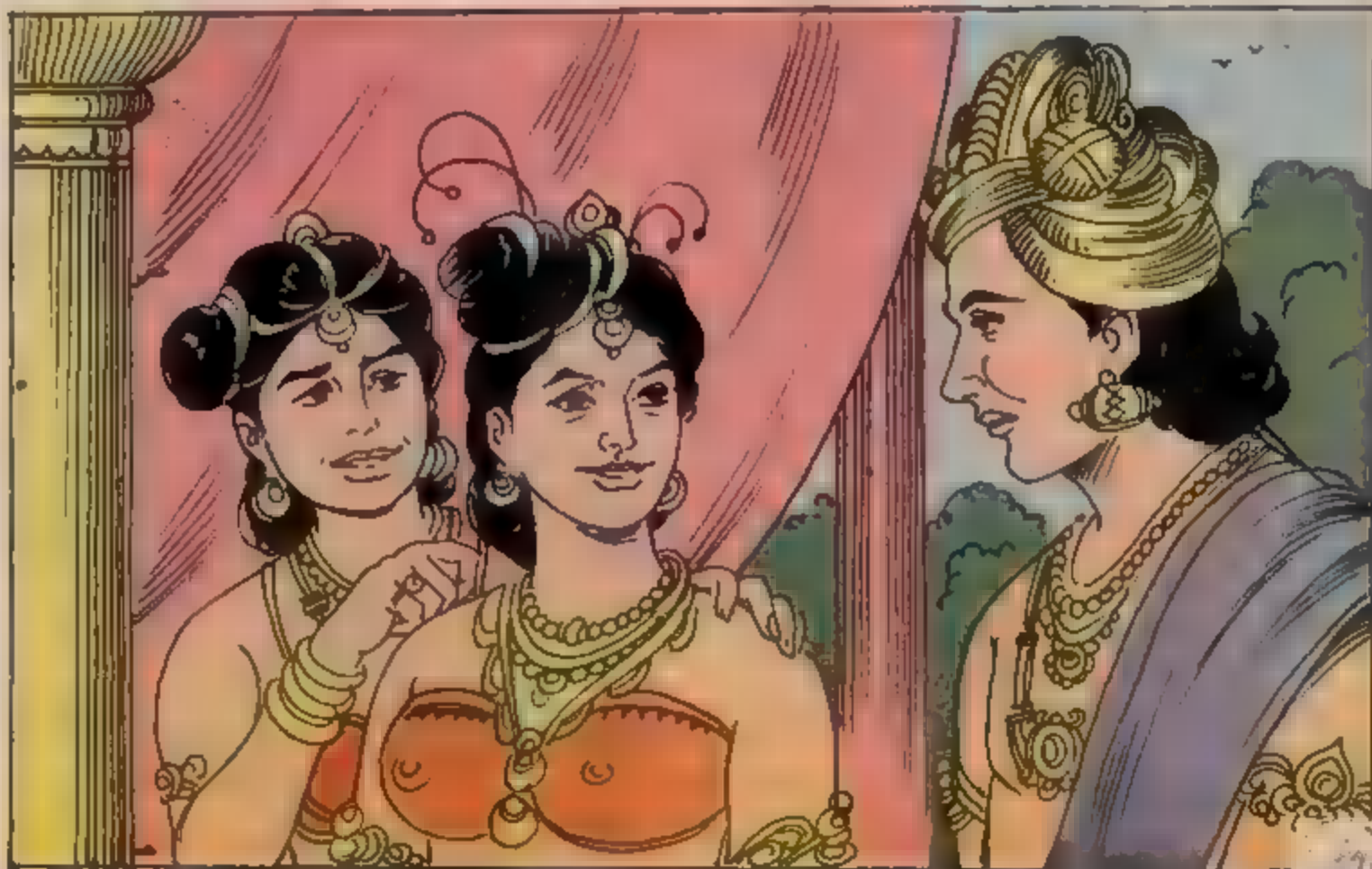
"Good luck, like a silver sun, will shine on you forever – once this crisis is over and Ashoka is enthroned as the Emperor."

The two girls stood up. "We know, Vidisha Devi would not pardon us for the deception we are out to play on Sushima. But, we must pay our debt to Prince Ashoka," said one of the girls.

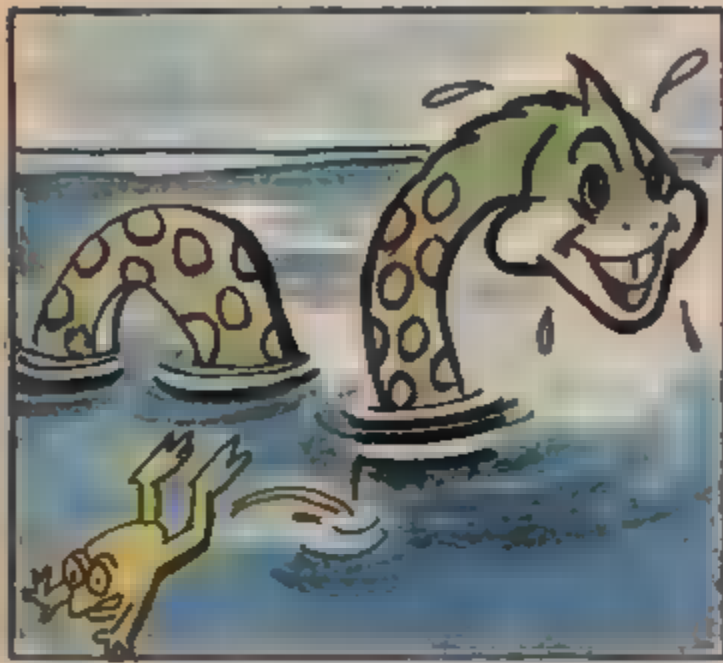
"Besides," said Yasa with a twinkle in his eyes. "You love adventure. For a long time you have lived as harmless as nuns. It is time again you acted according to your nature!" said Yasa, laughing.

"That's our old nature. We have outgrown it. But let's see if it is still effective," said the two ladies.

– To continue



Golden Hour - No. 5 : Answers



1. 'Nessie', the Loch Ness Monster.

2. Tibetan monks call it Yeti.

Westerners have named it the Abominable Snowman.



3. The Bermuda Triangle, also known as the Devil's Triangle.

4. Hollow bones make the bird's skeleton light but strong. The skeleton, in fact, is lighter than the bird's feathers.

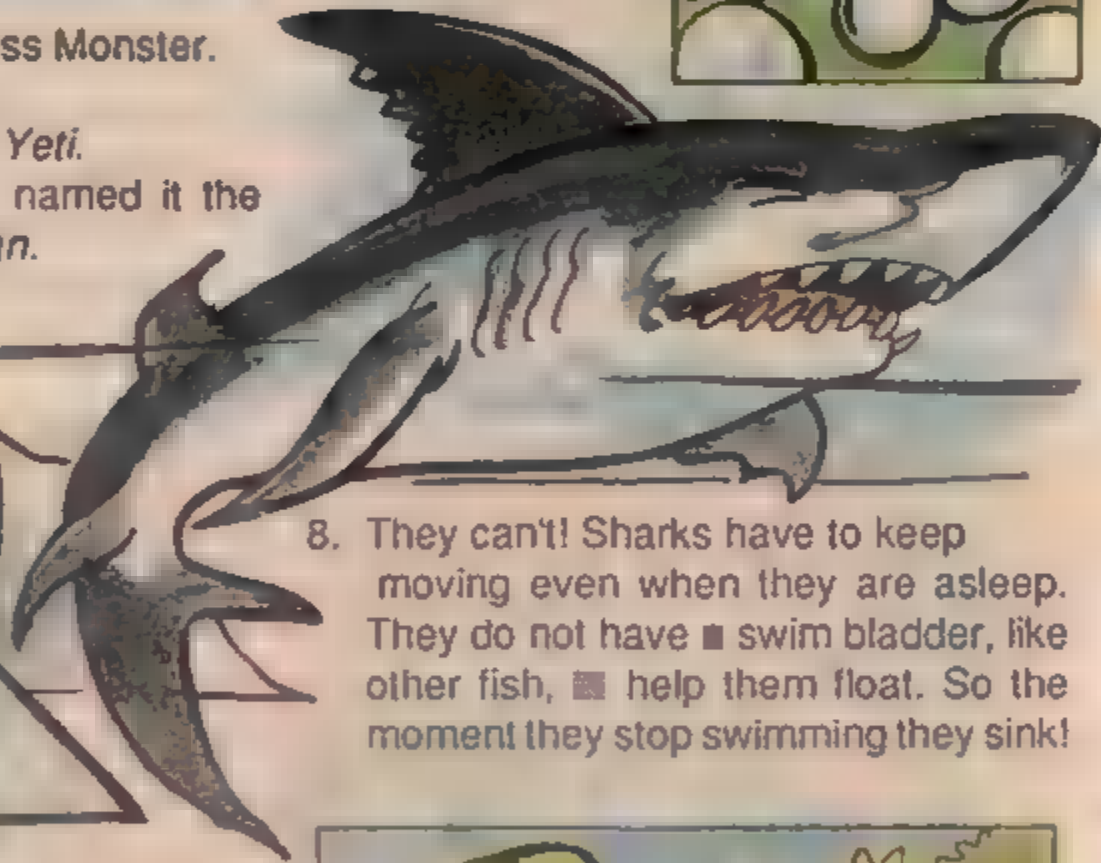
5. Just seven bones!

6. King Kong

7. The ostrich. The average ostrich egg weighs 1.6 kg.



8. They can't! Sharks have to keep moving even when they are asleep. They do not have a swim bladder, like other fish, which help them float. So the moment they stop swimming they sink!



Factual Error

THE BIG HUNT

Prehistoric man never did hunt or fight dinosaurs. Dinosaurs died out before man could make his appearance on earth.





New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

THE PRINCE'S DILEMMA

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikram did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King, normally you should be enjoying a good sleep at this hour of the night. Instead of doing that, what makes you go through this strange rite? Aren't you afraid? Are you under the impression that some supernatural power is protecting you from evil spirits or men? Beware of such impressions. They may prove absolutely wrong! In order to explain my point, let me tell you the story of Prince Indraneel. Pay attention to it. That should bring you some relief."

The vampire then went on with his narration:

Rudrapur was a small kingdom, but it was peaceful and the people



were happy. The king had a courteous and kind-hearted son, Indraneel, liked by everybody. Prince Indraneel and the sons of the army commander and the royal priest, Sudhir and Sampad, were playmates. They had a fourth playmate, though younger than them. She was Kusumkumari, the minister's daughter.

As the three boys grew up, Prince Indraneel and Sudhir were sent to a *gurukul* for their studies, whereas Sampad was taught by his father in the duties of a priest. In the absence of the other two boys, Sampad got the chance to play with Kusumkumari and he felt deeply attracted towards her. But he soon realised that he, being a Brahmin, could never marry

Kusumkumari.

Some years passed. After they completed their studies, the prince and Sudhir were back home. They, of course, could not any longer play or mix freely with Kusumkumari who had by now become a beautiful young lady, but both began to love her.

One day, while the prince was talking to Kusumkumari in the garden, Sampad, the priest's son, suddenly appeared there. He seethed with jealousy when he saw the prince and Kusumkumari engaged in pleasant conversation. He took the prince to task on some flimsy ground and spoke very rudely to him. But the prince never gave any retort. He just looked surprised.

After a while, as Sampad left the scene in a huff, he was suddenly bitten by a snake. But his father, the priest, cured him by chanting some *mantra* and applying medicine.

A few days later, Prince Indraneel, Sudhir, and Kusumkumari were enjoying a stroll in the orchard behind the garden when they saw a ripe mango atop a tree. That was rather strange, for it was not the season for mangoes. Kusumkumari was eager to have it. Sudhir began climbing the tree.

While at the *gurukul*, the prince had been secretly taught a rare *mantra*. He could make any dead creature spring to life, if only for a moment, by infusing into it a small spirit which

was at his command. The creature would do his bidding and become a corpse once again. He saw a parrot lying dead under the mango tree. He at once recited the mantra and directed the spirit to pluck the mango. The parrot flew high, picked the mango with its beak and then flew down and lay dead once again. The prince took the mango and offered it to Kusumkumari.

Sudhir got the impression that the parrot had picked the fruit of its own accord but the prince for some reason killed it and took hold of the fruit.

"Aren't you ashamed of killing a parrot? And who are you to offer the fruit to Kusumkumari after I had taken the trouble of climbing the tree?" he screamed.

In his excitement he slipped off the branch and fell down. In the process one of his legs got fractured. The prince called a gardener and carried Sudhir to his home with his help.

Now the prince began to believe that some supernatural power was guarding him. It was punishing all those who harmed or insulted him. Sampad was rude to him and was bitten by a snake. Sudhir insulted him and suffered a fall. What caused such incidents if not some unseen power?

One day, the king called Prince Indraneel and said: "I am planning for your coronation as the Crown



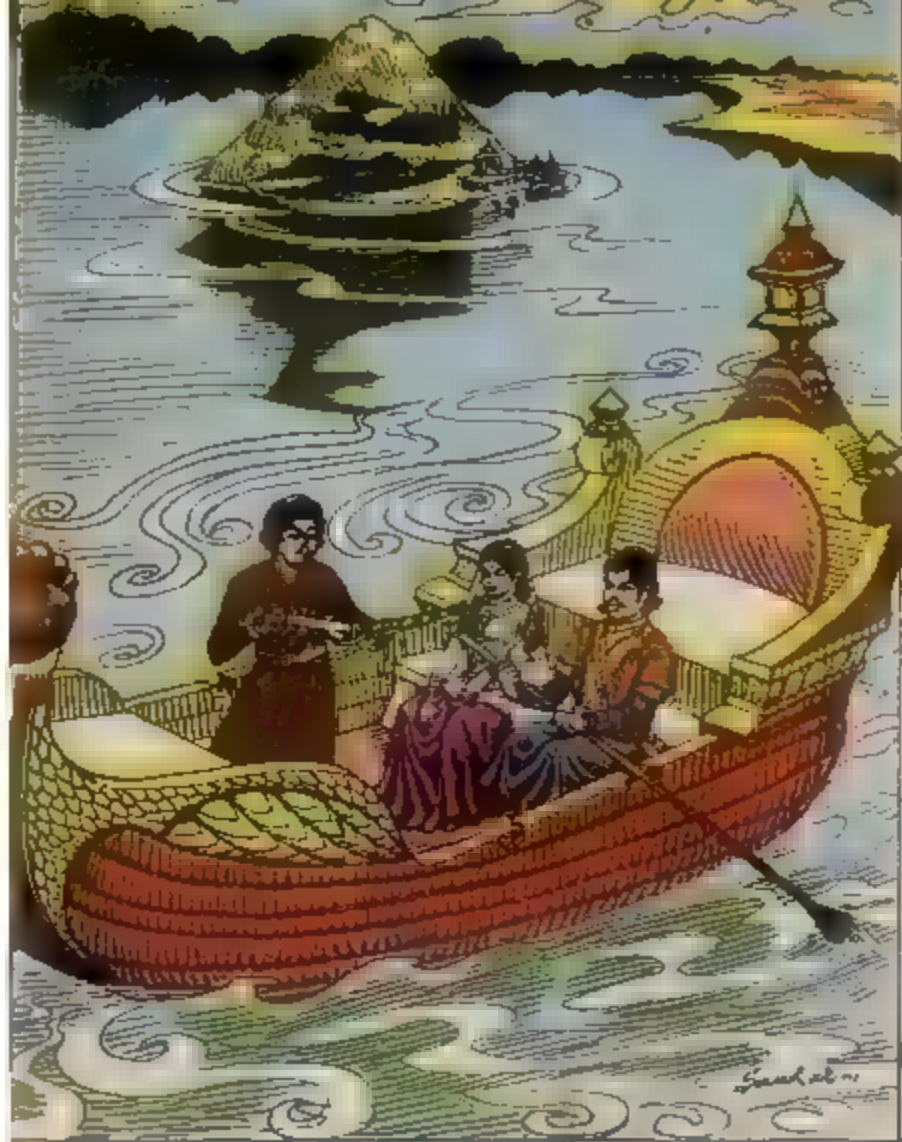
Prince. I would like you to get married on the same occasion. What do you say?"

"As you please, Father!" said the prince, blushing.

"There are proposals from four royal houses. They have also sent portraits of the girls they intend you to marry. But portraits cannot be entirely trusted. Why not travel for a while and meet the girls and choose a bride?" asked the king.

"Is that quite necessary, Father?" said the prince, lowering his head.

"That won't be necessary if you have already chosen your bride!" said the king. "I don't care if the girl of your choice does not come of a royal house. Whomsoever you marry would



be elevated to the status of a princess!"

The prince felt like jumping with joy. Probably the king knew about his love for Kusumkumari.

"Tell me your decision in a week's time!" the king said, as the prince took leave of him.

It was time for the prince to inform Kusumkumari that their marriage was in the offing. He sent a maid, inviting her for a brief boating in the river that flowed by the palace.

He waited for Kusumkumari on the river-bank. She came, but along with Sudhir. They boarded the boat. The prince and Sudhir began rowing. The prince thought that there was nothing wrong in Sudhir also knowing about the proposed marriage. So he

told Kusumkumari how the king had allowed him to choose his own bride and, of course, she knew who his choice was!

Suddenly: Sudhir stood up and shouted at the peak of his voice, "You are the prince; you are going to be the Crown Prince; there will be a time when you will be crowned the king. So, you can do anything you like. But know that your action is unfair. You are arrogant."

"Why do you say so?" asked the surprised prince.

"Don't pretend not to know! You know that I love Kusumkumari. Even then you are plotting to marry her. If you aren't a coward, why not fight with me, defeat me, and win her?" shouted Sudhir and he unsheathed his sword. The prince too stood up and wrested the sword from his hand. In the wrestle, the boat was upturned. All the three fell in the river.

Kusumkumari was a good swimmer. She swam to the shore. The prince was trying to lay his weight on the upturned boat when he slipped and the edge of the boat struck his head. He fainted.

When he opened his eyes, he found himself on the river-bank and also saw that Sudhir was pressing his stomach to make him spit out the water he had gulped unknowingly. Sudhir walked away when the prince regained his sense.

"How delicate you are!"

commented Kusumkumari. "Do you know why you had to suffer like this? Sudhir thinks that some supernatural power guards him and that causes trouble for all those who offend him," she said and went away.

The prince returned to the palace. The very next day he met his father. "Father, allow me to travel across the country for a year or so. What's the hurry in making me Crown Prince? My marriage too can wait!" he told the king.

The liberal king had no reason to disagree. The prince set out for distant lands the very next day.

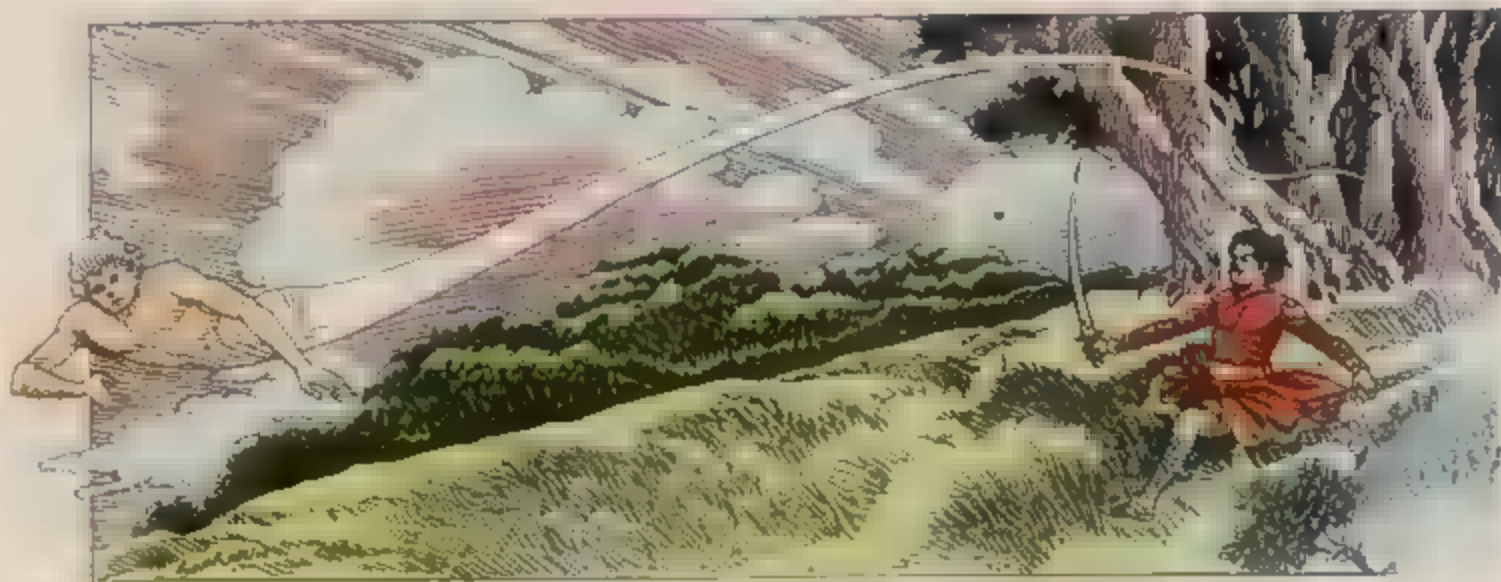
The vampire paused and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone: "O King, why did Prince Indraneel behave in such a manner? Kusumkumari had not declined to marry him! Was he afraid of the supernatural power guarding Sudhir which could harm him? Answer me, if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowing the

answer, your head would roll off your shoulders!"

Forthwith replied King Vikram, "It's true that Kusumkumari did not decline the prince's proposal, but she did not show any inclination either. The fact is, while she loved Sudhir, she also could not reject the prospect of becoming the queen of the land. The prince could not have appreciated such an attitude. Noble that he was, he gave her the opportunity to marry Sudhir, by being away from the kingdom for a long time.

"He had already lost his faith in his earlier impression that some supernatural force was guarding him. How then could he believe that Sudhir was protected by such a power? Where is the question of his being afraid of that power? It's not out of fear that he left the kingdom, but out of his own goodness and soundness of character."

No sooner had the king finished his reply than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip!



NEWS FLASH

India's flag on North Pole

Squadron Leader Sanjay Thapar, of the Indian Air Force, stood on the North Pole on April 21. But that may not make much news. What really made news is, he landed on the icy land after skydiving from a height of 10,000 ft from a helicopter. On jumping out of the flying machine, he somersaulted twice while familiarising himself with the area and scanning for a landing spot. After that, it was a free fall for nearly 7,000 ft at the descent rate of 176 ft per second. The last 3,000 ft he came down using his parachute, the entire exercise taking just 6 minutes. On landing, he hoisted the Indian tri-colour for the first ever time on this Arctic endpoint. The temperature then was minus 33 degrees Celsius at the jump altitude, and minus 26 degrees at the landing point. Incidentally, Sanjay Thapar has to his credit the largest number of skydiving jumps in India. He was part of an expedition organised by the Para Rescue Centre of Russia.

To promote literacy

Ramprakash Balde (22 years), of Mandor district in Madhya Pradesh, has studied only up to the 10th standard. He did not pursue his studies because he is without his right leg from birth. But that did not deter him from undertaking an all-India tour on his 2-wheeler. His aim was to promote literacy. He started from his State—Madhya Pradesh—some time in July and completed his journey, touching most of the 32 States and Union Territories, in New Delhi on August 15 (Independence Day). He hopes to get into the Guinness Book of Records as the world's first handicapped person to travel the

longest distance on a two wheeler. His daring journey was sponsored by international organisations, like the Rotary club and Lions club.

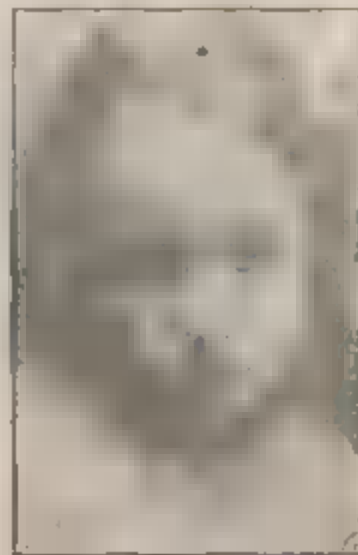
A celebrity cow

Her name is Emily. This five-year-old cow was awaiting her doomsday in a slaughter-house where the owner thought she was secure within the 5 ft high fence all around. One day, she was missing. Evidently, she had managed to jump over the fence, and that was something unusual for a hefty cow like Emily. Anyway, a search was started and advertisements were inserted in newspapers. She was recovered from the woods near Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A. Among those who joined the search were Meg Randa and husband Lewis Randa, of Hopkinton, near Boston, both of them strict vegetarians. Though there were others willing to pay as much as 500 dollars, the owner of the slaughter-house took only a token payment of one dollar from the Randa couple, who runs the Peace Abbey Farm, which keeps horses, goats, dogs, and rabbits. The Randas propose to use Emily to promote vegetarianism and teach children how to care for animals. The "story"

of Emily will soon be made into a movie.

Allergic to water

Probably the only such case in the world. She is 8-year-old Heidi Falconer, of Germany. She cannot drink and bathe in water. What a pity!



India's Coral Paradise

Text : Meera Nair ♦ Artworks : Aritra

Two to four hundred kilometres west of Kochi, Kerala, lies Lakshadweep — the only coral islands in India.

Lakshadweep is a tiny archipelago comprising 36 islands. It became the country's tiniest Union Territory in 1956 and was named Lakshadweep in 1974. Until then the islands were known as Laccadives, Aminidivi and Minicoy islands.

Of the 36 islands, only ten are inhabited. They are Amini, Andrott, Agati, Bitra, Chetlat, Kadmat, Kalpeni, Kavaratti, Kiltan and Minicoy.

The first settlers were from Kerala. Legend has it that when Kerala's last ruler, Cheraman Perumal, left for Mecca after having adopted the Islamic faith, the Raja of Cannanore sent his soldiers after him to persuade him to return. However, their ship struck a rock and they were forced to turn back.

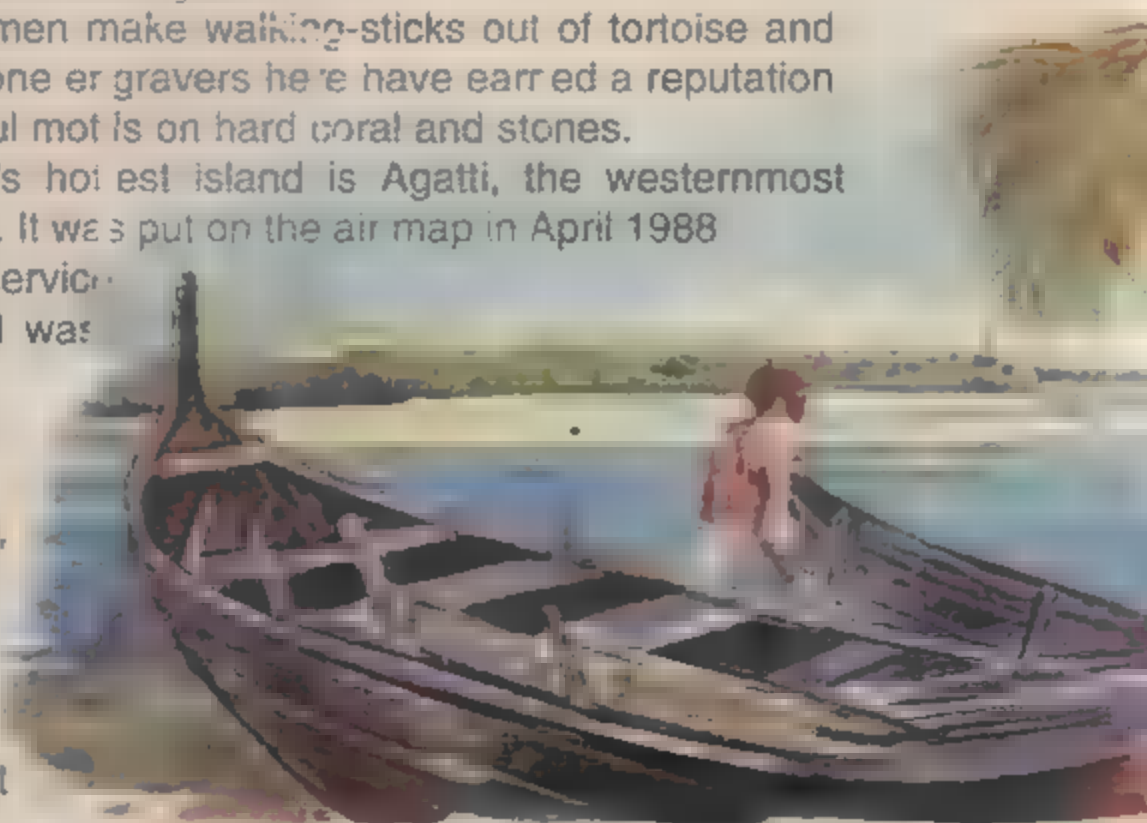
On their return journey, they saw several idyllic islands which they described to the Raja. The Raja made an announcement that anyone who wished to settle down on the islands would have the right of ownership of the land they cultivated.

Amini was the first island to be inhabited. It is about 3 kilometres long and slightly over 1.6 kilometres wide.

Amini's craftsmen make walking-sticks out of tortoise and coconut shells. Stone or gravers here have earned a reputation for carving beautiful motifs on hard coral and stones.

Lakshadweep's holiest island is Agatti, the westernmost island of the group. It was put on the air map in April 1988 when a Vayudoot service from the mainland was inaugurated.

The people of Andrott, an island south-east of Amini, were the first to embrace Islam. Today, 94% of Lakshadweep's population of about 51,680 is Muslim.



A boatman at Lakshadweep



The Ujra Mosque, Kavaratti

How did Islam come to Lakshadweep? It is believed that an Arab saint, Hazrat Ubaidulla, had a dream in which he was instructed by Prophet Mohammed to spread the message of Islam to distant lands.

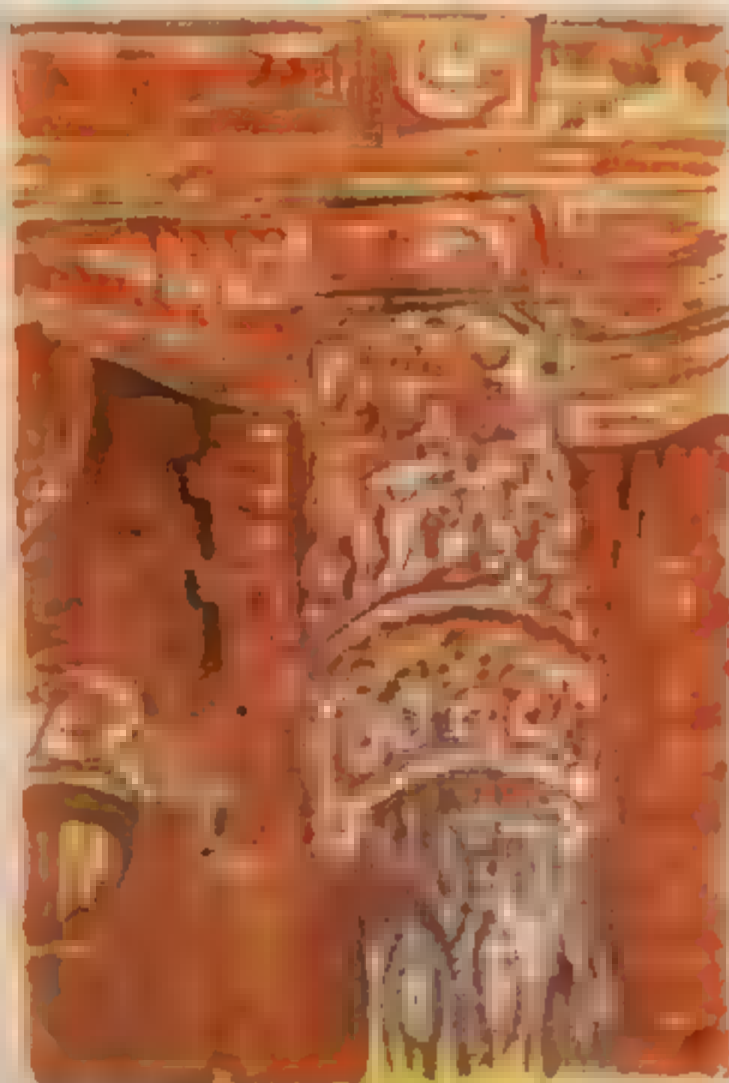
Accordingly he set sail, but his ship capsized in a storm. He is believed to have drifted to the shores of Amini on a plank of wood.

Ubaidullah had no success in converting the locals at first so he sailed to the neighbouring islands and succeeded in spreading Islam in Andrott, Kavaratti and Kalpeni. He died in Andrott. His tomb has been enshrined in the Jumaah Mosque.

Andrott is the largest island in Lakshadweep. The entire island is covered with coconut trees that yield the finest copra in the archipelago.

Kavaratti, the capital of Lakshadweep, lies between Amini and Andrott. It is 6 kilometres in length and about a kilometre wide. It is the most developed island and has the highest percentage of non-islanders as residents. All the government offices and houses of government officials are located here.

Kavaratti's craftsmen are extremely skilful. Their skill can be seen in the Ujra Mosque, the most outstanding of the 52 mosques of this Union Territory. It was built in 1670. The ceiling of the mosque



The ornately carved driftwood ceiling in the Ujra Mosque

is made of driftwood and ornately carved and painted in complementary shades of green and red. There is a well here whose water is believed to possess curative properties.

South of Kavaratti is Kalpeni, called 'Kolfaini' by Arab writers. It was on the direct route of ships sailing for Arabia. Kalpeni is enclosed by an immense lagoon. It has three islets — Cheryam, Tialakkam and Pitti.

Pitti, also called 'Pakshi Pitti' or the island of birds, is the most interesting of these islets. It is a tiny reef, and reaching it is quite an adventure — one has to swim the last 50 m to the island. Not a blade of grass grows here. Its sole inhabitants are hundreds of thousands of seabirds, mainly terns. Their cacophony can be heard as one approaches the shores.

Two species of terns, the 'sooty' and the 'noddy' terns have made Pitti their breeding ground. The nests which they make on sand, shingle or rock, are pretty and colourful — the birds line them with broken pieces of multicoloured seashells. The eggs resemble chicken eggs but have black or brown

blotches on them. They are a great favourite with the people of Amini and Andrott, who used to visit the island regularly to collect them till the government declared Pitti a bird sanctuary.

The terns are useful to fishermen. They use them as guides to locate huge shoals of tuna. Since both terns and tuna hunt small fish, fishermen know that wherever these birds are, the tuna are bound to be present too.

The southernmost island in Lakshadweep is Minicoy. Its emerald lagoon is large and deep enough for small ships to enter.

The great thirteenth-century traveller, Marco Polo, called Minicoy the *Female Island* because most of its men were sailors and away at sea. Things haven't changed much since then. The men are either engaged in fishing or work on ships and women do most of the work on the island — right from office work to manual labour.

Dress and language set the people of Minicoy apart from the other islanders.

The men here dress in jeans and T-shirts and the women wear long, brick-



red robes which are intricately embroidered around the neck. They cover their heads with a piece of black or white cloth. Even little girls who have hardly begun to walk, wear scarves.

On the other islands, the men wear *lungis* and the women wear tight-fitting embroidered blouses and a lower garment called *kachi* which is held in place with a waistbelt.

The people of Minicoy speak Mahl. On the other islands, Malayalam is the main language.

It is believed that the people here unlike those of the other islands, are descendants of settlers from the Gujarat area. Most of them are called 'Takrus' which could be a corruption of 'Thakur'. As in Gujarat, every house here has a cotton swing.

Their traditional dance called 'Dandi' is similar to the 'Dandiya Raas' of Gujarat.

Minicoy, in common with the rest of Lakshadweep, has a matrilineal society which gives the women of this Union Territory a higher social status than that enjoyed by women in most other parts of India.

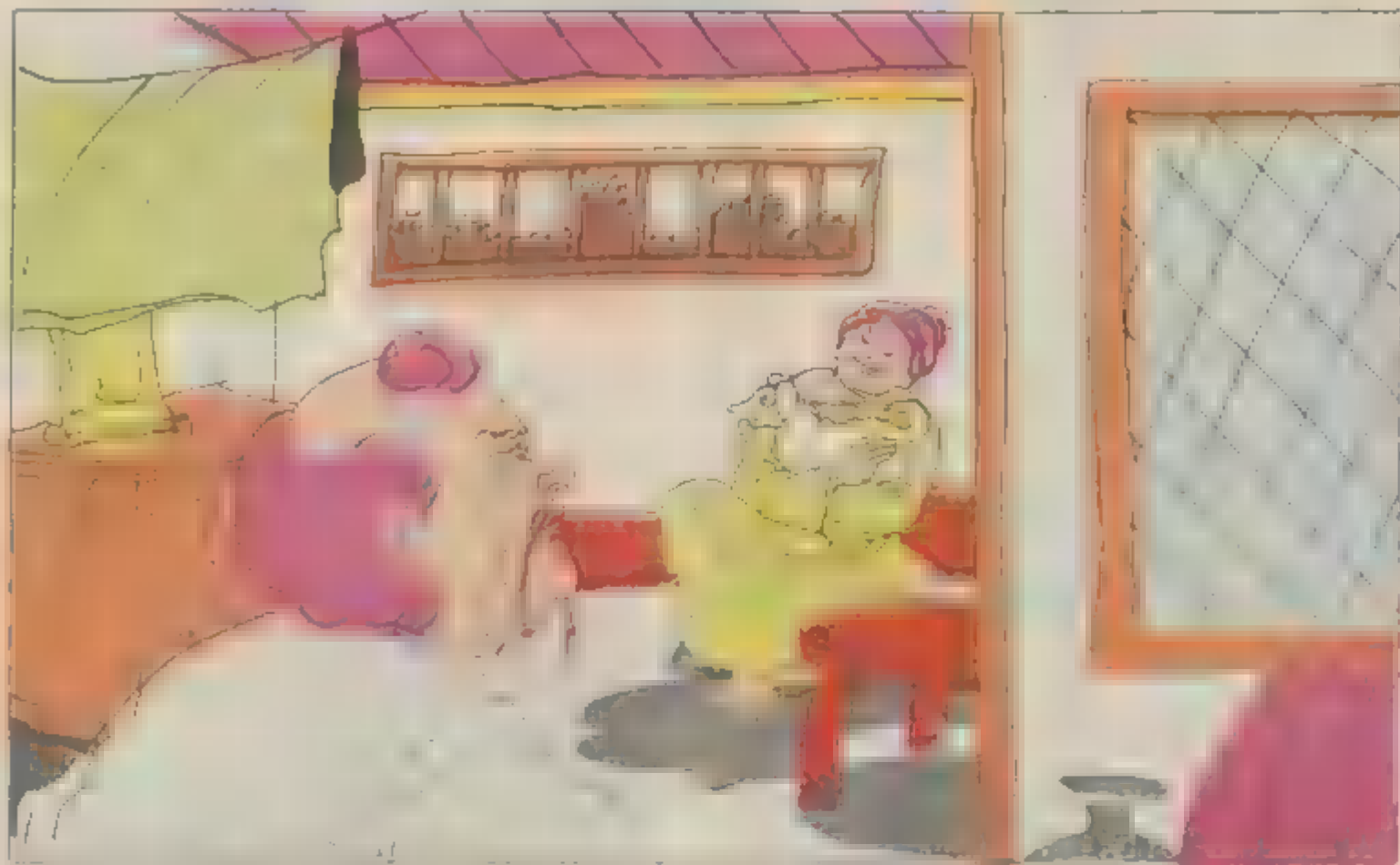


Women of Lakshadweep



The Lava dance performed by the Raveris, (the today tappers) believed to be the oldest settlers of Minicoy

The Magic of Love



Long long ago, when the earth was still young, there lived in a hamlet a kindly old man and his wife with their sweet little dog, Snowy. They called him so because he was as white as snow. He had drooping ears, dreamy eyes, and a tail smartly curled upward. Since they had no children, the couple treated Snowy as their own son. Indeed, he proved himself a wise and loving child to them.

When his master tended the garden, Snowy always helped him clear away the dry leaves and carry the vegetables to the old woman. One

day suddenly the dog tugged at his dress, and led him to one corner of the plot. He began to scratch the ground with his paws and barked, "Waou Waou! Wuf Wuf! Dig here, dig here!"

"All right, as you wish, my little one," said the old man and began to dig, as his pet wagged his tail in excitement.

He dug for quite some time but his dog would not leave him until he had dug for another hour. At last he heard a metallic sound as his shovel struck something hard. He looked closely and to his amazement saw a silver pot



full to the brim with sparkling coins of gold!

The old couple's joy knew no bounds. "We'll never be poor again! The treasure is more than enough to last our lifetime!" they said happily.

"Dear Son, it is all due to you. We would have never discovered the fortune by ourselves," they said, tenderly stroking Snowy's head and served him his favourite dish for dinner.

They built for themselves a cosy little house. The rest of their gold they gave away to the poor and the sick in the nearby hamlets.

It so happened, the good old man and woman had a greedy and wicked neighbour. It did not take him long to

know how overnight they grew so rich! One evening he came knocking on their door. "I'm alone at home tonight. Would you mind lending me your sweet little dog? I'll return him by morning," he asked very courteously with a low bow.

"Surely, you may have him," replied the kind old man. "You know, he is jolly good company."

The greedy neighbour led the dog straight to his garden. "Now show me where I should dig for the gold," he demanded tugging at his collar. "Be quick or I'll give you a good beating."

So frightened was poor little Snowy that he softly cried, "Woof, Woof! Dig here!"

The greedy man at once began to shovel away the earth and soon had made a big hole. Suddenly he too struck something hard and solid.

"Hurrah! Here is my gold!" he said delightfully and reached down to gather his treasure.

Alas! All that he found were rugged rocks and stones.

"How dare you trick me?" he shouted at the poor dog and angrily struck his head with his shovel. The blow was rather hard for the little animal and he died with a gentle moan.

At dawn the good old man knocked on his neighbour's door. "I've come to fetch Snowy, for it's time for his breakfast," he said.

"Oh, You've come for your worthless dog? Listen, old man, he was

very rude to me. Instead of gold, he gave me rocks! So I hit him and there lies he!" answered the cruel man with a nasty scowl.

The good old man and his wife were very very sad indeed. They buried their beloved Snowy in their garden. By and by a pine tree grew on his grave and it soon became very large and beautiful.

One day said the old woman, "Let's make something out of the fallen branch of the lovely pine in remembrance of our lost child."

"Ah, that's a fine suggestion! Let's make a bowl, as you need a new one to grind your rice," agreed her husband.

Skilled that he was, the old man soon made a nice little bowl, shining and gleaming, out of the fallen chunk of wood of the pine tree. Together

they began to pound and grind the rice in it. Lo and behold, something very strange took place. The rice in the bowl suddenly began to grow and grow soon filling the floors of their humble dwelling and flowed out into the yard too. Only when the bowl was turned upside down did it stop to produce more.

"This is a magic vessel! We don't have to worry about our food any longer," said the old woman still unable to believe her eyes.

"Yes, perhaps our darling Snowy is still caring for us. I'm certain he was no ordinary dog!" exclaimed her husband.

Their inquisitive neighbour was intently observing what was going on. It was not before long that he came once again knocking on their door.





"Gentle folks, may I borrow your lovely bowl?" he asked very politely.

"Yes, you may do so," readily agreed the generous couple, having already forgiven him for his earlier misdeed.

But what do you think did the magic bowl produce for the wicked greedy man? Only dirty rocks and stones, and nothing more. Soon his house and his yard were filled with them. In rage, he threw the lovely bowl into the fire.

When the kind old man later came for it, his neighbour said: "Your useless bowl? There it rests in my hearth as a handful of ashes!"

"Alas, we had made the bowl in memory of our dear Snowy," sadly

said the other. "But will you allow me to take its ashes?"

"Take them, by all means!" answered the wicked man.

So the sad old man scooped the ashes from the hearth and carried them in a small basket. He had not gone far when a sudden breeze blew and carried some of the ashes away. They scattered in the air and fell on the cherry trees that stood on the way. Something wonderful happened. As soon as the ashes settled on the bare branches, the whole tree was covered with beautiful pink blossoms.

"It's amazing! A miracle!" exclaimed the good old man and hurried home to tell his wife about it.

As he spoke to her, a wonderful idea struck his mind.

"Imagine, dear wife, what I could do now," he said with a twinkle in his eyes. "I could go about the countryside adorning the bare trees with beautiful flowers."

"Yes, indeed!" replied the good woman. "How happy everyone will be to see the trees blossoming and nature smiling in cold winter!"

The good old man chuckled at the mere thought of it. He held the basket of ashes and set forth on his noble mission. Though aged, his steps had a youthful bounce as he walked along, spraying the leafless bare trees with the ashes. On his lips was a lively song and he sang it loud and clear.

I'm off to drape the bare trees

*With pink blossoms and cherries
sweet.*

*I'm off to bring the joys of spring,
In the cold winter when no birds
sing.*

Indeed, as the flowers blossomed forth on all the bare brown branches and even little fruits appeared and birds began to sing, it seemed just like spring again. The old man smiled and blushed with happiness wondering at the change taking place around him.

As he thus walked along, he suddenly saw a cloud of dust approaching him. It came closer and he saw the king and his companions returning after a hunting expedition.

"Well, what has happened to nature all of a sudden? How come these trees are in bloom in the middle of winter? Why, they even bear fruit!" he asked, looking about in amaze-

ment.

Then he saw what the good old man was doing and heard his sweet little song.

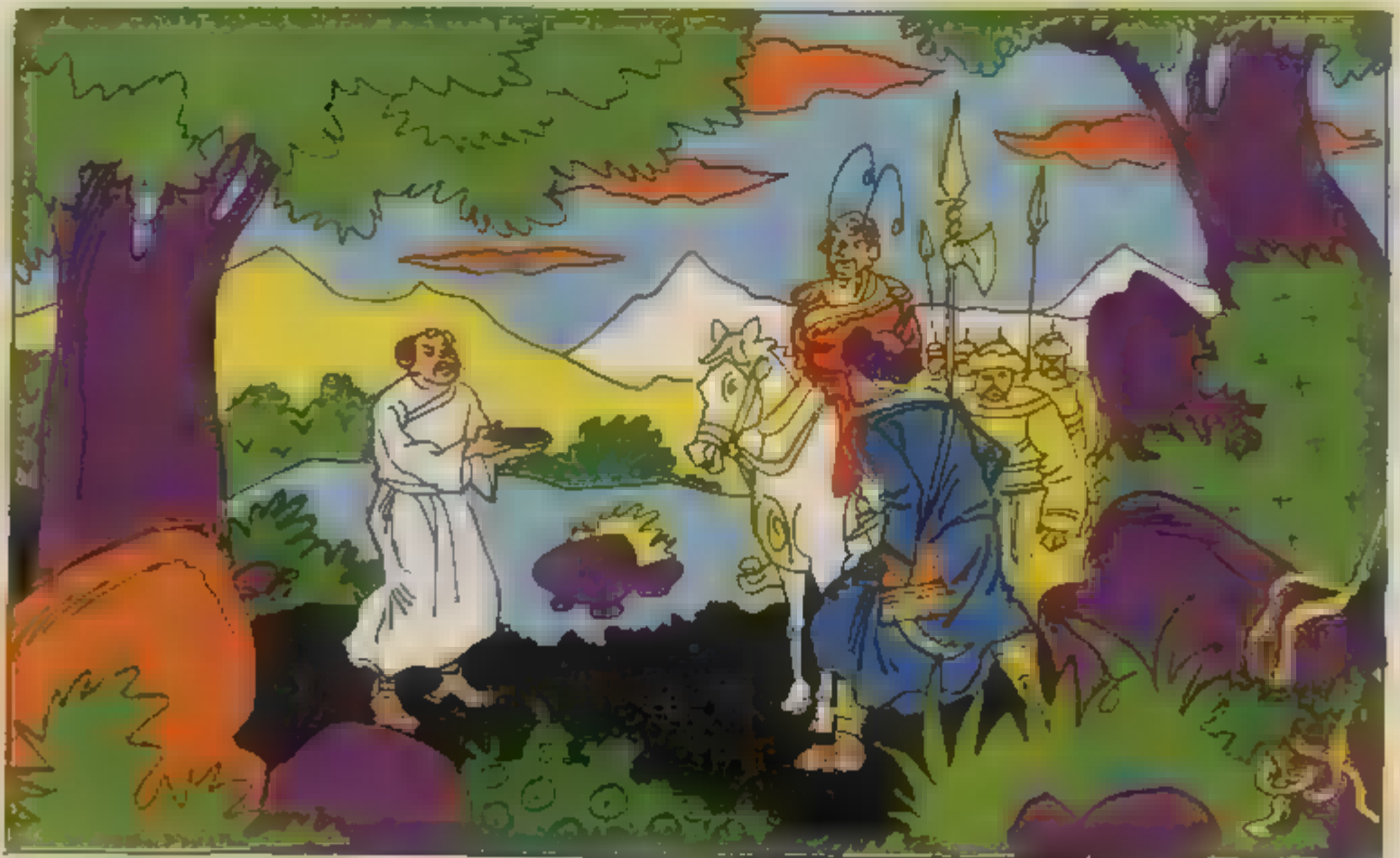
"Oh! My good friend, you have indeed made the world beautiful around us with your magical ashes and you will bring much happiness to all my people," said the king patting his back.

"O Your Majesty, it is my great pleasure and joy," replied the other.

"Let this noble harbinger of spring and happiness have all that he requires to remain happy the rest of his life," the king instructed his officials and rode back to his palace.

The old man hastened home to tell his good wife the wonderful fortune that had befallen them.

It did not take long for their wicked neighbour to learn about the many



rewards that the king had bestowed upon the kind old man. He became more envious than ever and decided to win the king's favour himself. So, dressing up like the old man, he collected the remaining ashes from his hearth and set out on the road. As soon as he sighted the king and his men, he began to scatter the ashes and sang the same song in his toad-like voice.

Alas, the ashes did not fly to rest on the branches and turn into beautiful flowers! Instead, they blew right into the eyes and noses of the king and his men. Soon they began to sneeze and sneeze and would not stop sneezing.

"What do you think you are doing, Mister?" asked the king angrily, wiping his eyes.

"But I'm the old man trying to laden the trees with blossoms!" replied the greedy fellow.

"No! No! You are not the dear old man of spring and happiness, but only a greedy fellow, trying to imitate him in order to win rewards from me. For your crooked ways, you'll be punished and thrown behind the bars," declared the king.

So the greedy man was punished and he did confess how mean and wicked he had been towards his good neighbours.

The kindly old man and his wife basked in the sunshine of happiness for the rest of their lives. But they never forgot their loving little Snowy and would often stand and pray in front of the grand pine in their garden, with tears of gratitude.

— Retold by Anup Kishore Das

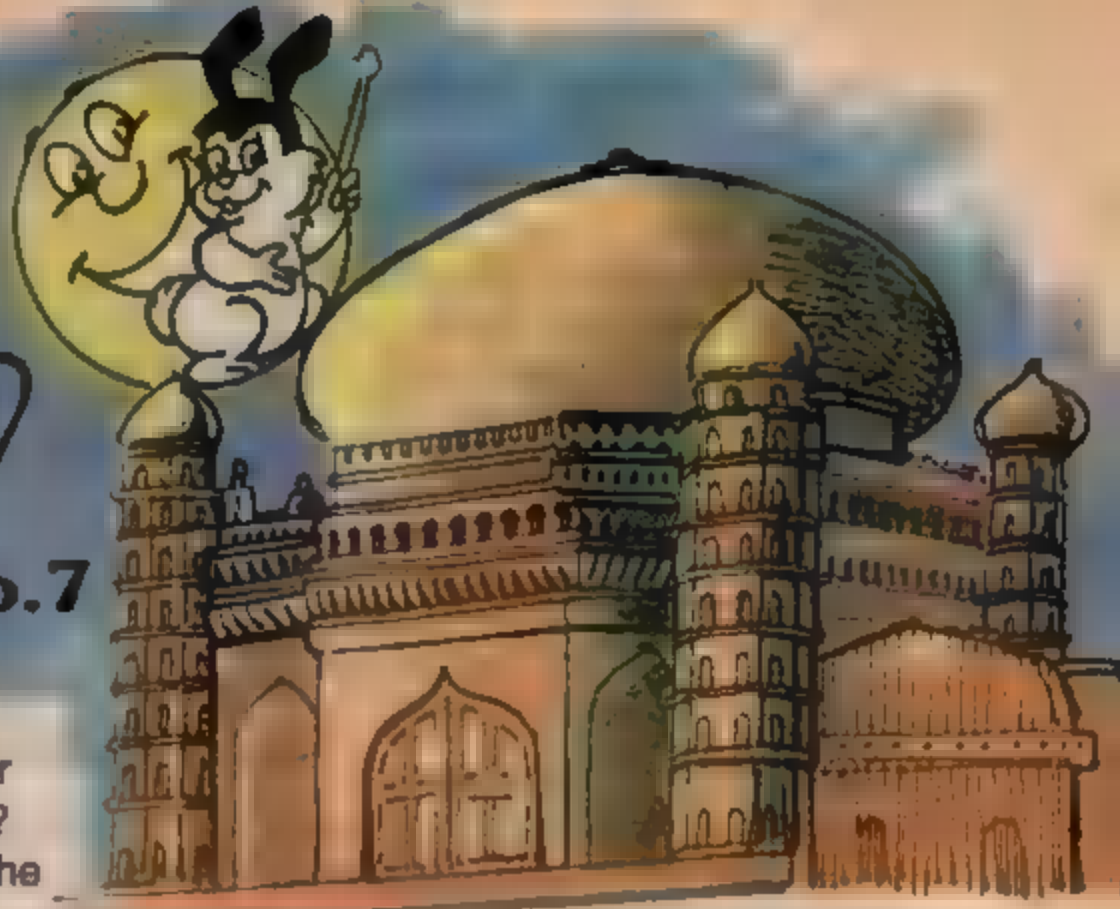


CHANDAMAMA

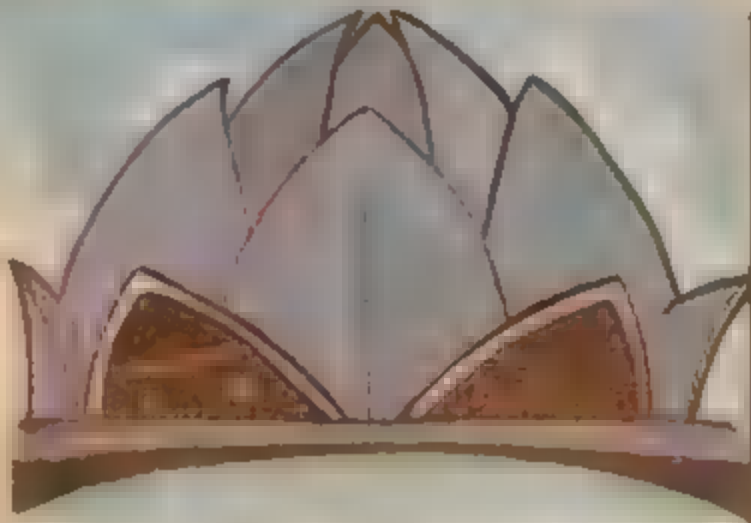
Golden Hour

No.7

This is the tomb of ■ great ruler of Bijapur. Who built this tomb? What is the special feature of the tomb?

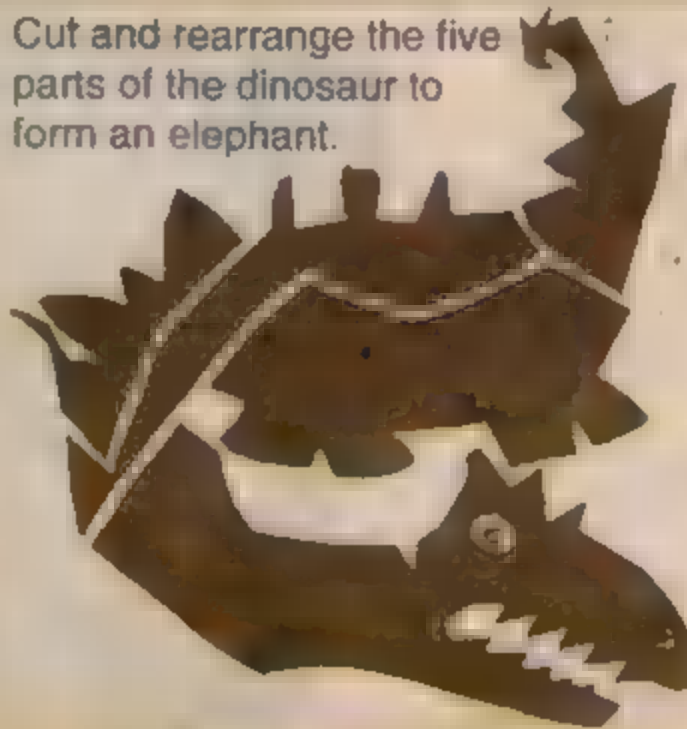


In a small village in Assam, on some moonless and foggy nights in September/October the birds suddenly dive down to any light source and act as if in a trance for several days. To this day no one has explained this mysterious phenomenon. ■■■■ is the ■■■■ of this village?



This structure of concrete petals in Delhi ■ ■ house of worship. ■ belongs to the youngest religion ■ the world founded by a Persian prophet. What is the name of this religion?

Cut and rearrange the five parts of the dinosaur to form an elephant.



Spray Paint With a Tooth Brush

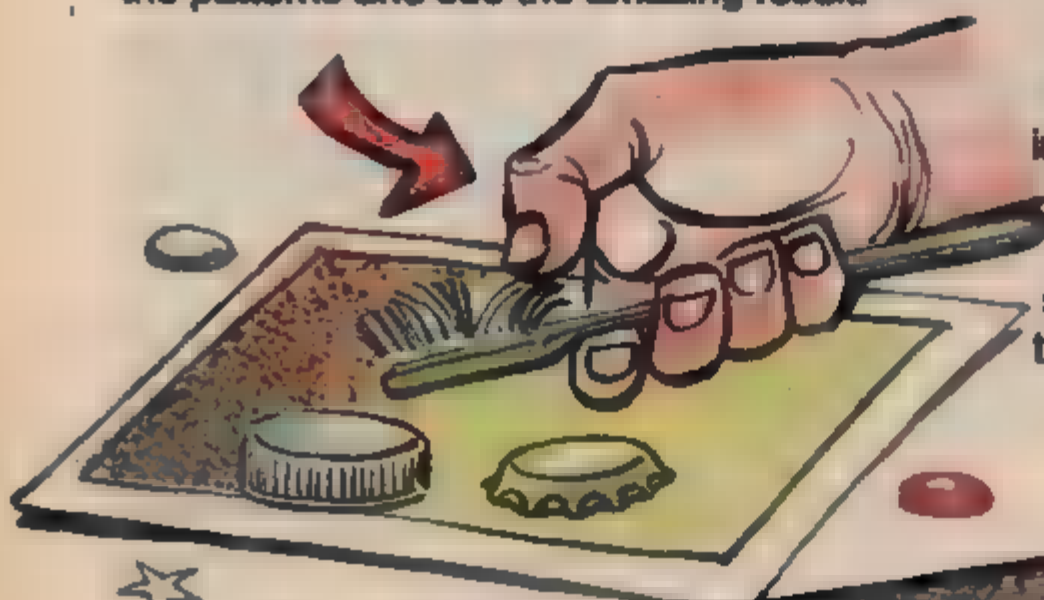
You can create a beautiful picture using just a toothbrush, some colours and lots of imagination.

Cut and arrange some simple designs on a piece of drawing paper. Weigh them down with some heavy objects such as coins or bolts.

Mix a little colour with water on a plate. Dip the bristles of a tooth-brush in the colour. Hold the tooth brush over the drawing paper, press the bristles back with your thumb and then gently release them. Fine dots of colour will be sprayed over the drawing paper. When the paper is covered remove the patterns and see the amazing result.



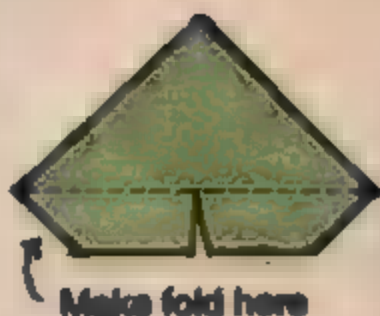
You can even try fabric colours and photo transparent inks. Try with a single colour in the beginning. Moving the tooth brush away from the paper gives finer dots. Moving the patterns after each layer of paint gives special effects.



Pack a Tree in Your Greeting Card.



1. Take a square piece of coloured paper and make a crease in it as shown.



Make fold here

2. Cut away three-fourths of the bottom half and then make a cut in the middle.



3. Make a fold at one of the edges and then take the fold backward and forward across the width of the paper.

4. Your pop-up tree is ready. Paste it in the centre of a greeting card. Paste some of the upper creases to the bottom to make the tree spread out.



Jumbled up Comics

Here is a famous adventure of Sindbad the Sailor told in pictures. But the pictures are all jumbled up. Give the correct order of the pictures.



Draw a Rhinoceros in Three Easy Steps...



Golden Hour - No. 6: **Answers**

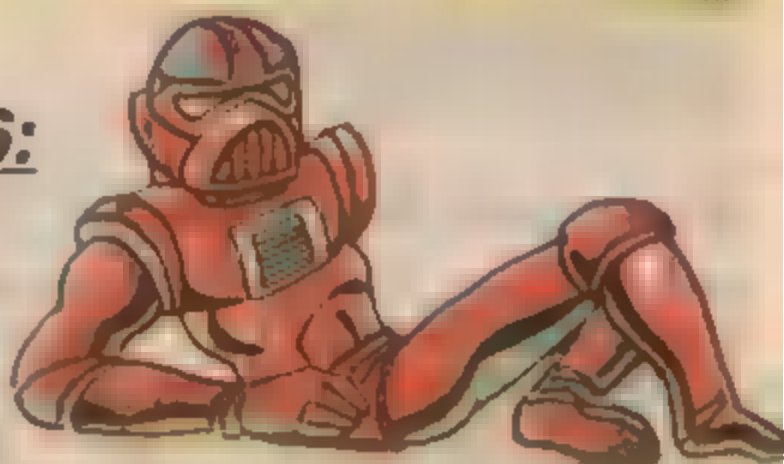
1. Karel Capek. He first used the word Robot in his play R.U.R.

2. The Maglev trains have no wheels! Maglev is short for magnetic levitation. They run above a special track suspended by strong magnetic forces.

3. No matter how colourful the pictures appear in a colour television set it produces only three colours, red, green and blue. Tiny strips or dots of these primary colours merge together to form a multi-hued picture.

THE ROBOT COUNT

There are 9 Alpha Robots producing 18 cars, 18 Beta Robots producing 27 cars and 27 Gamma Robots producing 9 a day.

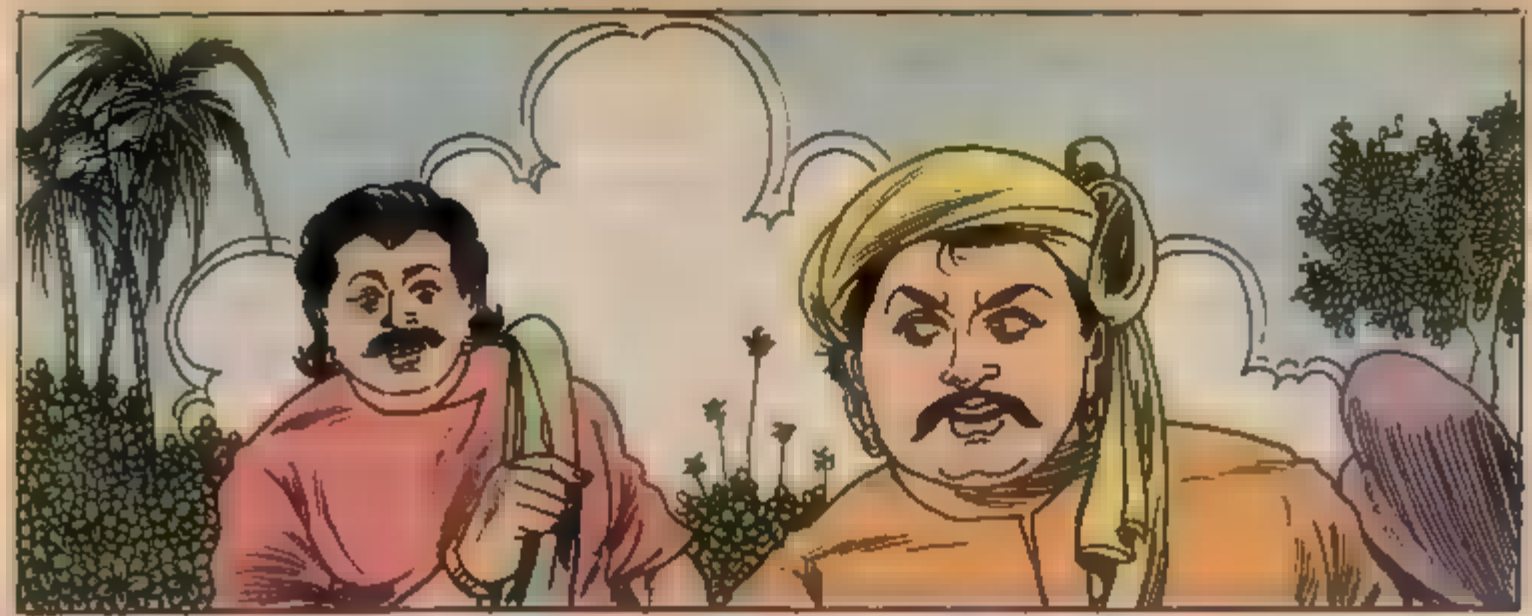


4. Benjamin Franklin. His experiment saved many lives for he next invented the lightning conductor.

5. The year 2000 is an exception to the century year rule, because century years divisible by 400 are leap years.

6. Plimsoll Line is marked on the outer side of a ship to show the level to which the ship can be safely loaded. The water must not come above the Plimsoll Line.

7. If you say 'Frankenstein' is the name of the monster, you are wrong. Frankenstein is the scientist who created the monster.



A sharp dialogue

Vardhan was notorious for quarrelling with the villagers. Any occasion came handy to him for raising a controversy.

But he had never had any occasion to quarrel with Rajaram. It was because Rajaram lived at the extreme end of the village and also because he was a very quiet man.

One day Rajaram was passing by Vardhan's field when Vardhan observed, "For the last few days your goats are regularly entering my field and eating up my plants."

"Animals eat only paddy or wheat. You have none in your fields. How could my goats eat up anything?" retorted Rajaram.

"What an expert on animal-habit! Don't animals eat anything other than paddy or wheat? Look there. Aren't they eating grass?" shouted Vardhan,

pointing to a nearby field.

"It is true that some animals are eating grass. But they are cows. Didn't you speak of goats?" said Rajaram.

Vardhan had never met with such strange argument. He looked in different directions and saw a goat. "Look, look, there is a goat. It is coming in this direction to graze."

"What is the proof that it is coming for grazing? It might be strolling for appreciating nature, for breathing fresh air!" said Rajaram.

But the goat soon began to chomp some small plants.

"Look there! What do you see?" demanded Vardhan enthusiastically.

"But you spoke of *my* goats! That is not my goat!" said Rajaram.

"But your goats are not angels! They too eat fruits and vegetables!" said Vardhan at the peak of his voice.

"Do my goats eat fruits and vegetables? Well, I shall never believe it unless I see it with my own eyes!" declared Rajaram.

It so happened that Rajaram's servant, Tintim, was leading his goats towards the meadow.

"Hello, Tintim, don't your goats eat fruits and vegetables?" Vardhan asked him.

"Why shouldn't they, Uncle Vardhan? They can eat fruits and vegetables with as much relish as we eat them!" answered Tintim.

"But I wouldn't believe unless I see them doing so with my own eyes," Rajaram insisted.

"Now, will you please lead them into my field and show your master how they eat?" Vardhan said angrily.

"Our goats will be thankful to you, Uncle!" said Tintim as he led the goats into Vardhan's field.

The goats began chomping several fruits and vegetables. Vardhan was very upset that he was losing so

much, but he would at least triumph over Rajaram!

"Look, look Rajaram, see whether your goats eat fruits and vegetables or not!" shouted Vardhan.

But Rajaram said nothing. Meanwhile Tintim did his best to guide the goats from one crop to another.

"Do you see, Rajaram?" demanded Vardhan.

"I don't. And I wouldn't believe unless I see with my own eyes!"

"Why don't you see, then?"

"Because I've my eyes shut!"

Vardhan was exasperated. He requested Tintim to lead his goats away.

"But you invited them, Uncle!" said Tintim while guiding the goats out reluctantly.

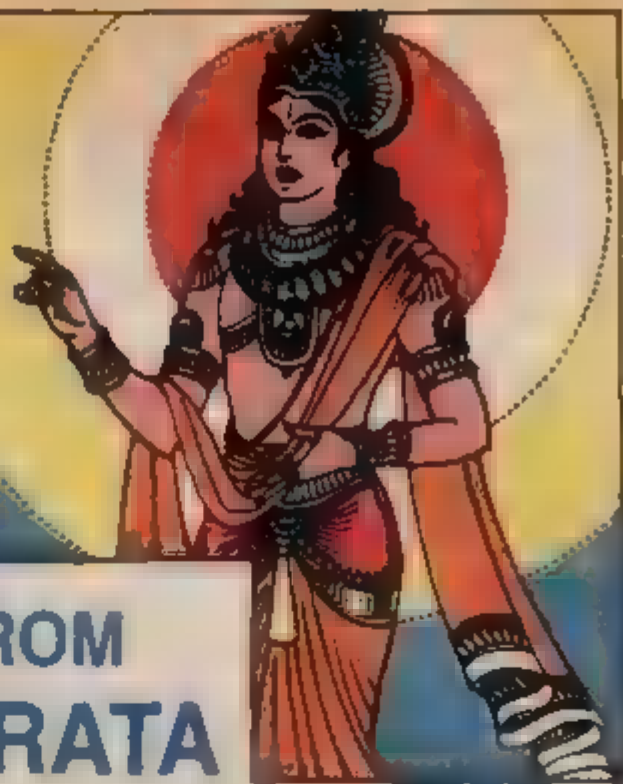
Never afterwards did Vardhan dare pick a quarrel with Rajaram. In fact, Vardhan became less and less quarrelsome thereafter.

And Rajaram had the last laugh, because at least that day, his goats could eat to their heart's content.





STORIES FROM MAHABHARATA



The story so far...

For nearly twelve years, the five Pandava princes with their consort, Draupadi, have undergone all the ordeals of living as homeless exiles in the forest. Soon, they will have to spend the thirteenth year in hiding. Should they be discovered, they must again go into exile for another twelve years.

Meanwhile Duryodhana, the eldest of the Kaurava princes, gloats over his cousins' misfortunes and plots with his evil uncle Sakuni, and Karna, to make sure that the Pandava princes would never regain their rightful inheritance of the kingdom of Indraprastha.

Jayadratha, King of Sindhu and a friend and ally of Duryodhana, comes to the forest and, in the absence of the Pandava princes, abducts Draupadi. The Pandavas, however, pursue him, rescue Draupadi and chastise him for his misconduct.

Karna, the sworn enemy of Arjuna, thought himself to be the son of a charioteer, but in fact he had been born through the Sun-god's boon to his mother, Kunti, before her marriage. One night, Karna was awakened by a brilliant light flooding his room, and when he sat up, he was confronted by the dazzling figure of the Sun-god. "You are in grave danger," said the god. "Indra, the King of

gods, will come to you disguised as a priest and beg of you to give him your magical coat of armour and divine ear-rings. Do not part with them, for they are your protection against your enemies."

"But, Father," cried Karna, "I never refuse anyone who comes to beg anything of me! I can protect myself without my armour."

"You speak foolishly," replied the

god gently. "If you part with the protection of your divine armour, then at least, demand in exchange the celestial weapon that never fails to achieve its end."

The following day Karna remained alert, anticipating the arrival of god Indra. Towards noon, the bent figure of an old brahmin accosted him. Surely this frail old priest could never be the King of gods! But, when Karna asked the priest what he wanted, he said, "Give to me your impenetrable coat of armour and your ear-rings, if you are true to your claim that you never refuse anything to anybody."

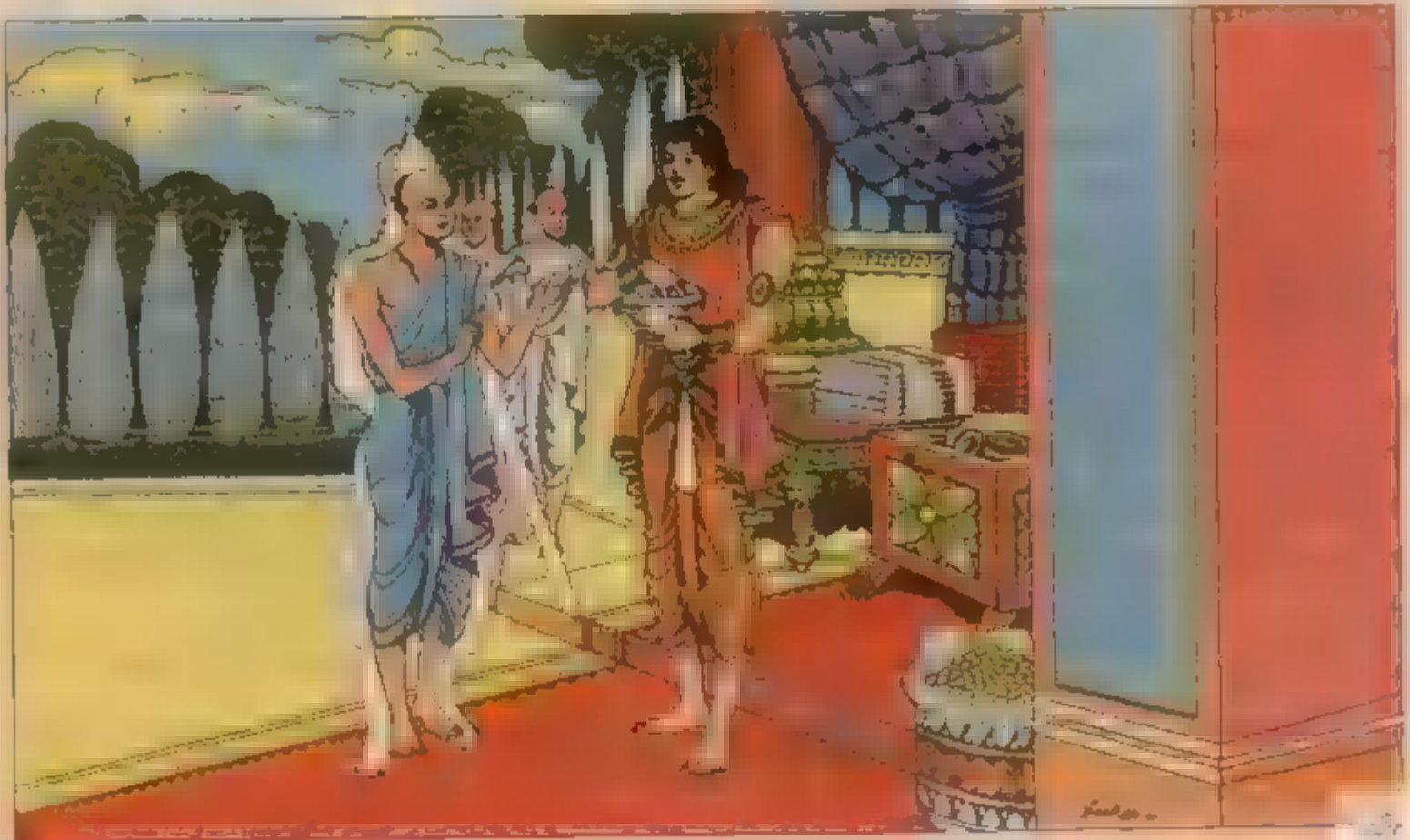
Karna now knew that this could be no other than god Indra. "I will gladly give you anything," said Karna passionately. "But in return will you not give me the celestial weapon that never fails to strike its target?"

God Indra agreed and from the air materialised the celestial weapon, and took Karna's armour and ear-rings.

When this news reached the Pandavas in their hermitage, Arjuna said viciously, "I bore in silence the insults of that son of a charioteer. But neither any divine armour, nor any celestial weapon can stop me from slaying him when the time comes."

Not long after this, a brahmin came rushing up to the Pandava princes and in great agitation, shouted, "A deer is running away with my fire kindler. Now I shall be unable to perform the fire sacrifice."

The Pandavas tried to pacify the brahmin and set out to catch the animal. But the deer was hard to catch: with prompt leaps and lightning movements, it decoyed the princes deep into the forest and then suddenly dis-



appeared. Worn out by the futile chase, the princes sat down for a rest.

Yudhishtira, like the others, was tormented with thirst. So he asked his younger brother Nakula to climb a tree, and see if there was any water nearby. Nakula soon climbed a tree and gave a joyous shout that there was a large pool close by. Yudhishtira bade him fetch some water so that they could all quench their thirst.

When Nakula reached the pool, he knelt down on the bank and was about to slake his thirst when a voice was heard: "Not so fast, son of Madri. This pool belongs to me. Answer my questions to my satisfaction before you drink."

Nakula was far too thirsty to heed any warning, but no sooner had his lips touched the water than he was overcome with drowsiness and collapsed on the bank as though dead.

When Nakula did not return, Yudhishtira sent Sahadeva to see what had delayed his twin brother. The same fate overtook Sahadeva, and when he failed to return, Arjuna picked up his Gandiva bow and went in search of his missing brothers.

At the pool, Arjuna was horrified to find both his brothers apparently dead. Swearing vengeance against the miscreants who had slain his brothers, the terribly thirsty Arjuna decided to drink before he searched for the wrongdoers. As he stooped beside the pool, the hidden voice said:

"Answer my questions before you drink, otherwise, you too shall suffer the fate of your brothers!"

Arjuna's anger knew no bounds. He shouted, "Who are you to dictate to me? I will drink first, then seek you out and kill you." But as he drank from the pool, he too collapsed.

After anxiously waiting, Yudhishtira turned to Bhima. "Something terrible has happened to our brothers. I'm afraid," he said. "Go and find out what is wrong. I will collect our weapons and follow you."

When Yudhishtira reached the pool, he could hardly restrain his grief to find all his brothers lying there as if dead. What trick was this and who played it? Had Duryodhana poisoned the water? Who else should want to kill his brothers? As he stood there lost in despair, again the voice thundered, "Your brothers died because they did not care for my words. Answer my questions before you quench your thirst."

Yudhishtira knew immediately that he was dealing with a Yaksha and guessed what had happened to his brothers. He remained calm and with great confidence, said: "Ask and I shall answer them."

The voice put questions to him one after another. "What fleets more than wind?"

Yudhishtira replied, "Mind."

"Who accompanies man in death?"

"Dharma. That alone accompanies

the soul in its solitary journey after death."

"What is the loss which yields joy and not sorrow?"

"Anger, for, by giving it up one will no longer be subject to sorrow."

The Yaksha posed several other questions and Yudhishtira answered them all. In the end the Yaksha asked: "O King, one of your dead brothers can now be revived. Which one shall it be?"

Yudhishtira thought for a moment and then quietly replied "Let it be Nakula."

The Yaksha looked puzzled and asked, "Why do you choose Nakula? Why not Bhima who has the strength of many elephants, or Arjuna whose prowess in arms is your protection?"

"O great Yaksha," replied Yudhishtira, "Dharma is the true shield or protection, not Bhima nor Arjuna. My father, King Pandu, had two wives, Kunti and Madri. I am

now the surviving son of Kunti, so she is not completely bereaved. It is only fair that one son of Madri too should live."

The Yaksha was pleased with Yudhishtira's impartiality and granted that all his brothers regained their life. As the four brothers got to their feet, each shaking his head in bewilderment as to what had happened, a figure seemed to rise out of the air.

It was the God of Dharma, who had taken the form of the deer and of a Yaksha so that he could see his son, Yudhishtira, and test him. He embraced Yudhishtira and said: "Only a few days remain to complete your twelve years of exile. The thirteenth year will also pass by and you will successfully fulfil your condition." Then he added in a sorrowful voice, "You will regain your kingdom but only after much trouble and tears."

— To continue





When does ■ film become ■ box-office hit? What does 'Box-Office' mean?
—Ashok Kumar Dash, Pandasuri

Box-Office is the cubicle in the theatre from where tickets ■ sold. When all the tickets are bought and up goes the notice "HOUSE FULL", and ■ this happens continuously for several days, the film shown in that theatre (as well ■ in other theatres where it has been released and which meet with ■ similar experience) can be called ■ box-office hit. It merely means 'a popular movie'.

Which is known as the Forbidden City? Why is it so called?

—Priyanka J. Kini, Jamnagar

A walled section of the Chinese capital, Peking (now called Beijing), built between 1406 and 1420 by the Ming dynasty, contains the imperial palace (Gu-Gong) and other buildings of the Chinese Empire. Common people were not permitted anywhere near this exclusive area. Things changed after the Chinese Revolution when the emperor was overthrown. There is yet another Forbidden City - Lhasa, in Tibet—where for a long time, the Chinese rulers kept foreigners out of the place.

What is ■ 'crocodile bird'?

—P. Srinivasa Rao, Srikurmam

This is ■ African bird, which often sits on crocodiles that come out of water to bask in the sun, and feeds on their insect parasites.

OUR READERS WRITE

Adoration

I am an old subscriber. I adore *Chandamama* for depth of knowledge and current affairs.

Dipti Ranjan Dash, Jagatsinghpur

Ghost Stories

I would like to see "Towards Better English" in a book form. I am interested in reading ghost stories.

P. Sharat Chandra, Secunderabad

Adventure Stories

Some adventure stories will make *Chandamama* a complete magazine.

D.P. Mukhopadhyay, Nikunjapur

SPORTS SNIPPETS

Record on T-shirt

The crowd at the European Cup Athletics held at Gateshead, England, had reasons for both exultation and sorrow—the first when they saw Donovan Bailey of Canada, sporting a T-shirt which had "9.84" written at the back. That was the timing of his world record for 100 metres at the recent Atlanta Olympic Games. At Gateshead on August 19, he won the event clocking 10.19 seconds. The disappointment came when Linford Christie, of Britain, withdrew from the event because of injury sustained in 200 metres held earlier. He finished second in the event behind John Regia, also of Britain, who clocked 20.62 seconds, while Christie's timing was 20.64 sec. Christie, who had so far run 64 times for his country, was expected to run the 100 metres for the last time. At Atlanta, because of false starts, he was disqualified from participating in 100 metres. He then announced that Gateshead would see him in action for the last time. He now says that the European Cup next year would be his 'swansong'.

Two records on same day

This happened on August 23 at Brussels, capital of Belgium. Morocco's Salah Hissou, broke the 10,000m mark, while Russia's Svetlana Masterkova set a record in women's 1,000 metres. Hissou's timing was 26 min. 38.08 sec, which was bettered by 5.45 seconds the record set by Ethiopia's Haile Gebrselassie last June. Svetlana clocked 2:28:98 in 1,000 metres—an event which is seldom held, compared to the more popular 800 metres



Salah Hissou



Svetlana Masterkova

and 1,500 metres—the last an event in which she had created a world record in Zurich a few days earlier. The two records were made at the Van Damme Memorial Track Meet.

Cycling record

A new world mark was set in 4,000 metres cycling by Chris Boardman, of Britain, at the World Championships in Manchester on August 28. He clocked 4 min. 13.353 seconds, wiping off the record set by Andrea Collinellia, of Italy (4:19:699) at the Atlanta Games.

2-year record broken

Algeria's Nourredine Morceli had established a new world record in 3,000 metres (7 min. 25.11 sec.) in Monte Carlo in 1994. Daniel Komen, of Kenya, broke this record at the Grand Prix II Athletics meet in Rieti, Italy, on September 1. His timing was 7:20:67. In the final four laps, he was all alone, with all his rivals falling way behind.

Girl in boy's team

That is 12-year-old Laura Harper, of Truro, England. She will join 13 boys on the Cornish under-13 tour of South Africa next February. She is considered the best girl cricketer in Cornish county and one of the Cornwall's brightest cricketing prospects. However, she can make the 2-week trip only if her mother accompanies her.

Venerated by Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists

No wonder, the **Champa** is popularly known as 'Temple Tree', because it is associated with holy places like temples and mosques. Muslims plant them in their graveyards, too. Perhaps, this factor was responsible for the Champa flowers acquiring the name "Dead Man's Flower". In Hindi, it is called *Chameli* and also *Gul-e-Chin*. But more than China, its original home is believed to be Mexico. The name in Marathi is *khairchampa*; in Gujarati, *dholo champo*; in Bengali, *dalama phula*; in Oriya, *golochi*; in Telugu, *arhataganneru*; in Tamil, *ilattalari*; and in Malayalam, *arali* or *vella champaka*.

The tree grows to a maximum height of only 6 metres. It has stiff, stout branches that spread. Their tips look blunt and swollen when they are leafless. The leaves are rather long, about 30 cm in length, and they crowd around the tips of branches. Broad and lance-shaped, they have veins which run parallel to each other, from the mid-rib to the leaf margin. Like many other trees, the champa is leafless during winter.

The flower petals have different combinations of colours—like yellow or white in the centre and red or pink on the outer surface. The flowering season is between February and October. They have an appealing fragrance.

Even when it is plucked off its roots, the Champa bears flowers, and this has given it yet another epithet: 'Tree of Life'.



JALALI

In a deep dense part of the forest where no woodcutter or hunter ever went, lived Jalali. He was a hermit who had achieved several feats. Wearing only a soft bark, he braved the heat of the summer and cold of the winter without feeling any difference. If he sat in meditation even, a cyclone could not sway him.

But the most remarkable of his achievements was his triumph over hunger. He could get the vitality and energy he needed from sunlight and air. He could go without food or water for any length of time.

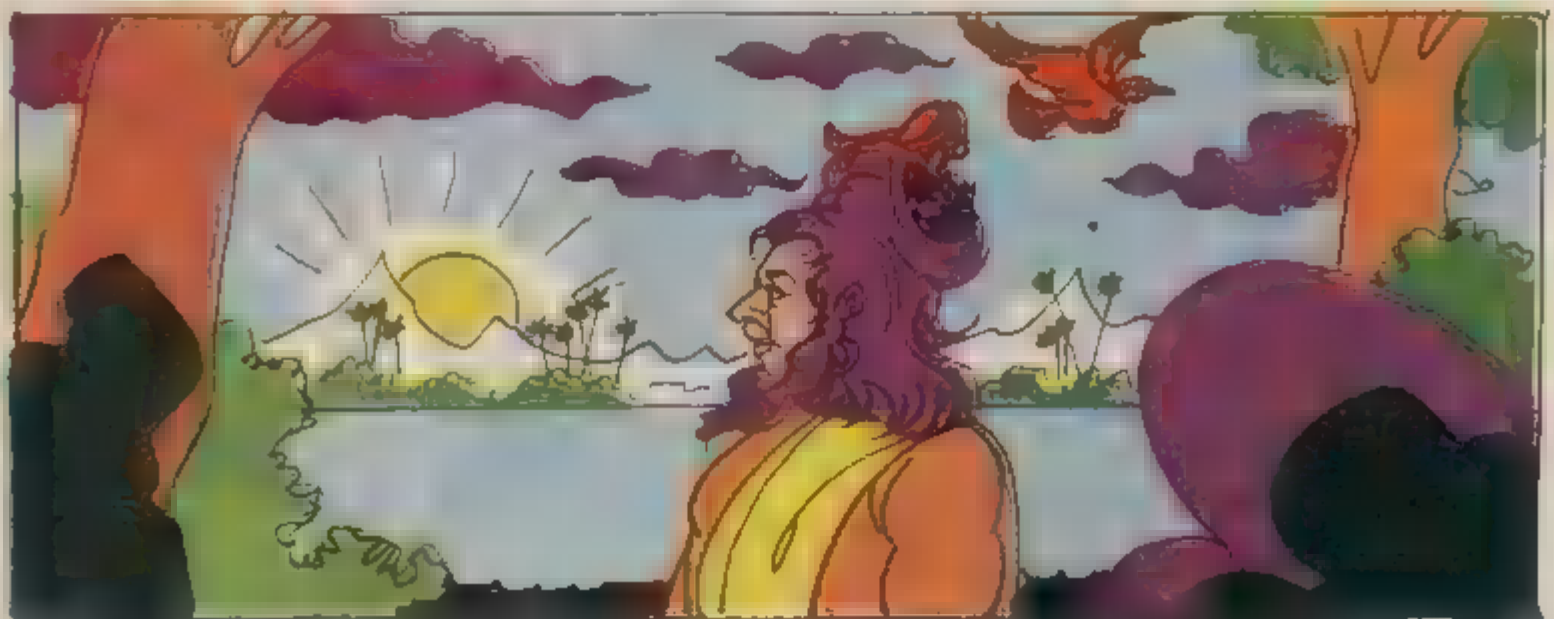
One day, while he stood still looking at the sunrise, two birds sat down on his bushy head, probably mistaking him to a pillar. Jalali did not make any move lest the birds should be disturbed. But soon one of them laid eggs inside his knotted lock, taking it for her nest. Jalali kept standing still so that the eggs would not fall down. The eggs were

hatched and by and by the chicks learnt to flap their wings. They played with their mother who flew away and returned with food for them.

Jalali bore all this calmly. Days passed. One morning the young birds flew away with their mother. But Jalali kept standing till they returned in the evening. Still later, the birds did not return for six days at a stretch. Still Jalali stood unmoved so that the birds would not feel bewildered on their return.

Next time, when the birds did not return for a full month, Jalali understood that they had found a new shelter. He went to the sea and washed himself. A thought came to him that he had indeed proved that he was extremely virtuous. Suddenly, he heard a voice from the sea: "What about Tuladhara, the merchant of Kasi?"

Surprised, Jalali started for Kasi and found out Tuladhara. Talking to him, he realised that his virtues were neutralised by his pride. He became humble and thereafter gained the true merit of nobility.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. What is the holy book of the Muslims known as?
2. In which two countries is bull-fighting a popular sport?
3. When people are injured, they are given immediate help. What is this called?
4. How many cards are there in a pack of playing cards?
5. What instrument does a doctor use to listen to and measure a patient's heart-beat?
6. A museum where living fishes and sea animals are kept — what is it called?
7. What is the minimum voting age in India?
8. When you cut your nails, you do not feel pain. Why?
9. Which country is the largest producer of gold?
10. Which is the most populated country in the world?
11. From what material is glass mainly made of?
12. What are paintings on walls or ceilings known as?
13. What is the study of the earth's surface, climate, soil, plants, and people called?
14. What are the sudden movements under the earth's crust called?
15. Name the two men who first walked on the moon.
16. In which country are people known as *Kiwis*?
17. What is the present day name of Persia?
18. For how long can a snail sleep?

ANSWERS

- | | | | |
|----|---|-----|---------------------------------|
| 1. | The Koran | 10. | China |
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FIVE LUCKY COINS



Gopal was an infant when his father died. On his death bed, he had told his wife, "The boy seems dull. But something tells me that he is lucky. Look after him and he will look after you well in your old age."

Gopal's mother never forgot her husband's last words. As Gopal grew up, he was found to be no more smart than a python. He loved to sleep. Even when he was awake, he yawned and looked at the world with disgust.

His mother sighed, but never neglected to feed him, herself working hard in households of different people.

Her husband had left five silver coins in a box. "These are lucky coins. Let Gopal invest them in some business when he grows up."

Gopal had grown up all right, but he responded to any call to work with

a yawn and nothing more.

One day his mother heard that Guptaji, a prosperous merchant of the neighbouring village, was going on a voyage to distant lands with some other merchants. She asked Gopal to hand him over the five coins and request him to buy something for him.

Gopal, as usual, was most reluctant to go. However, at repeated pleadings from his mother, he at last faltered forth to meet Guptaji, anxious to complete his mission and retire to bed.

Guptaji was amused. "What can I bring for only five silver coins?" he asked the boy.

"Don't know—an elephant or a monkey perhaps!" said Gopal, almost dozing.

Guptaji, surprisingly took a liking for the boy. "All right, all right, an elephant or a monkey! I shall remember," he said, deciding to buy a toy elephant or a toy monkey from some bazar abroad.

But he forgot all about it. His visit to a few lands and islands with the other merchants was fruitful and it was time for them to begin their return voyage home. As they were about to board their ship, they saw a mendicant moving about with three monkeys. The monkeys showed tricks and the man earned money. Guptaaji suddenly remembered Gopal's suggestion to buy an elephant or a monkey! He thought that if he could buy a trickster monkey, Gopal could move about with it and earn some chips.

"Will you sell me one of your monkeys? But I can spare only five silver coins!" he told the mendicant.

"Well, well, you can take this one," the mendicant said, pointing at one of the three monkeys.

The ship was lifting anchor. There was no time to lose. Money changed hands and Guptaaji boarded the ship. It was too late when he realised that the monkey he bought was an old one, absolutely lazy and unable to show any trick. He felt betrayed but could not blame anybody.

On their way, they stopped at a small island famous for pearls. While the merchants were buying pearls



from the local people, the monkey made a dive into the sea and came out with two oysters containing excellent pearls. It made several dives and brought out several pearls. Guptaaji was amazed and delighted. The fact is, the monkey originally belonged to that very island and its master had trained it in diving and locating pearl-containing oysters. When its master died, it was a sad creature. One day, it sat on a ship when the ship left and that is how it reached another land. The mendicant found it and kept it, hoping that it will learn a few tricks. But he had been disappointed. That is why he gladly parted with it.

Back home, Guptaaji sent for Gopal and gave him the monkey as well as



the pearls it had collected. Gopal and his mother could not believe their eyes. A happy change came over Gopal. He became active in the process of looking after the monkey which became his great favourite. With the price they got for the pearls, they built a fine house and bought lands.

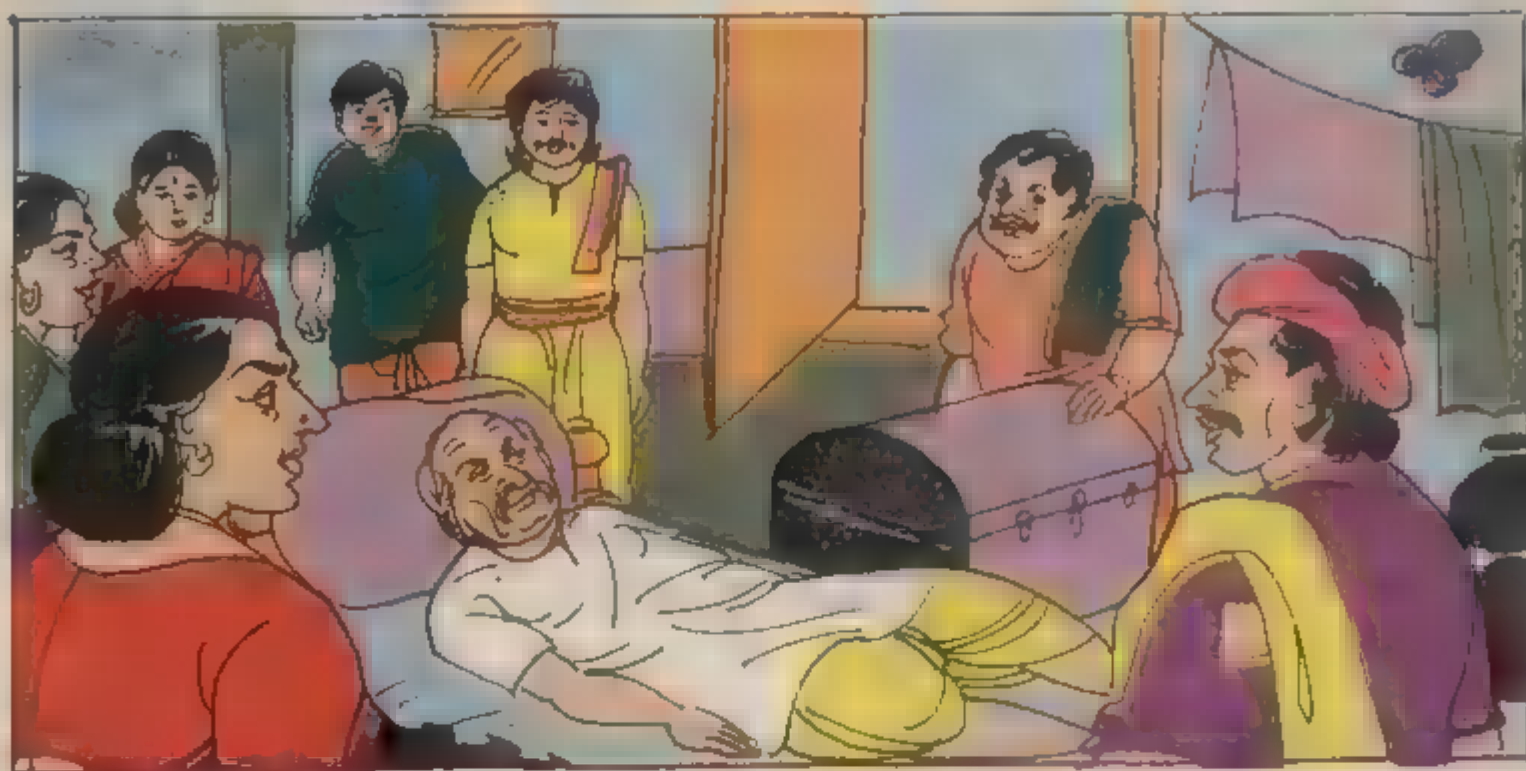
The monkey often pulled Gopal

towards the sea. At last Gopal joined Guptaji and other merchants along with his monkey in their next voyage. At the pearl island, his monkey made a hundred dives and came out with two hundred pearl oysters of the best variety.

He now got married and launched a business and prospered. He took great care of his mother.

SPOT TEN DIFFERENCES





A BOXFUL OF HAPPINESS

Once upon a time an old widower called his three youthful sons and said: "Dear boys, I'm tired and weak and can't work any longer. Perhaps the day is not far when I must take leave of this world."

"Don't you worry father, you may now repose and rest assured that all your needs will be taken care of by us. But what about the money you have....?" said the brothers slyly.

"Yes, yes, you're right! What use will the money be to me now?" replied the good old man and handed over to his sons the wealth he had amassed from years of hard labour. He hoped, of course, that as promised they would look after his happiness and comfort.

But alas, his three sons and their selfish wives squandered the money away in stupid revelries. Not a pie did they spend for their old father, feeding him with tasteless gruel in a cracked bowl and treating him as an unwanted burden.

The old man was in utter despair. But he had a very good friend in the clever shoemaker who lived in the neighbouring hamlet. To him he wrote a letter recounting all his woes. Not long after that his friend arrived with a big wooden chest.

"Dear Friend, this chest contains those valuable necklaces you had deposited with me. I must say that they are unique. None would have

ever been decorated with anything like these!" declared the shoemaker in the presence of the three brothers.

"Then, Father! Let's have one each!" exclaimed the brothers greedily staring at the box.

"I don't think you boys deserve them! But, of course, it is for your father to decide. But he had told me that the box would be opened only after his death."

The good shoemaker then took leave of his friend, handing over to him the key of the mysterious box. In no time the box had a magical effect on his sons and daughters-in-law. Suddenly they seemed to remember that their father, after all, was the head of the family and deserved their utmost care and devotion.

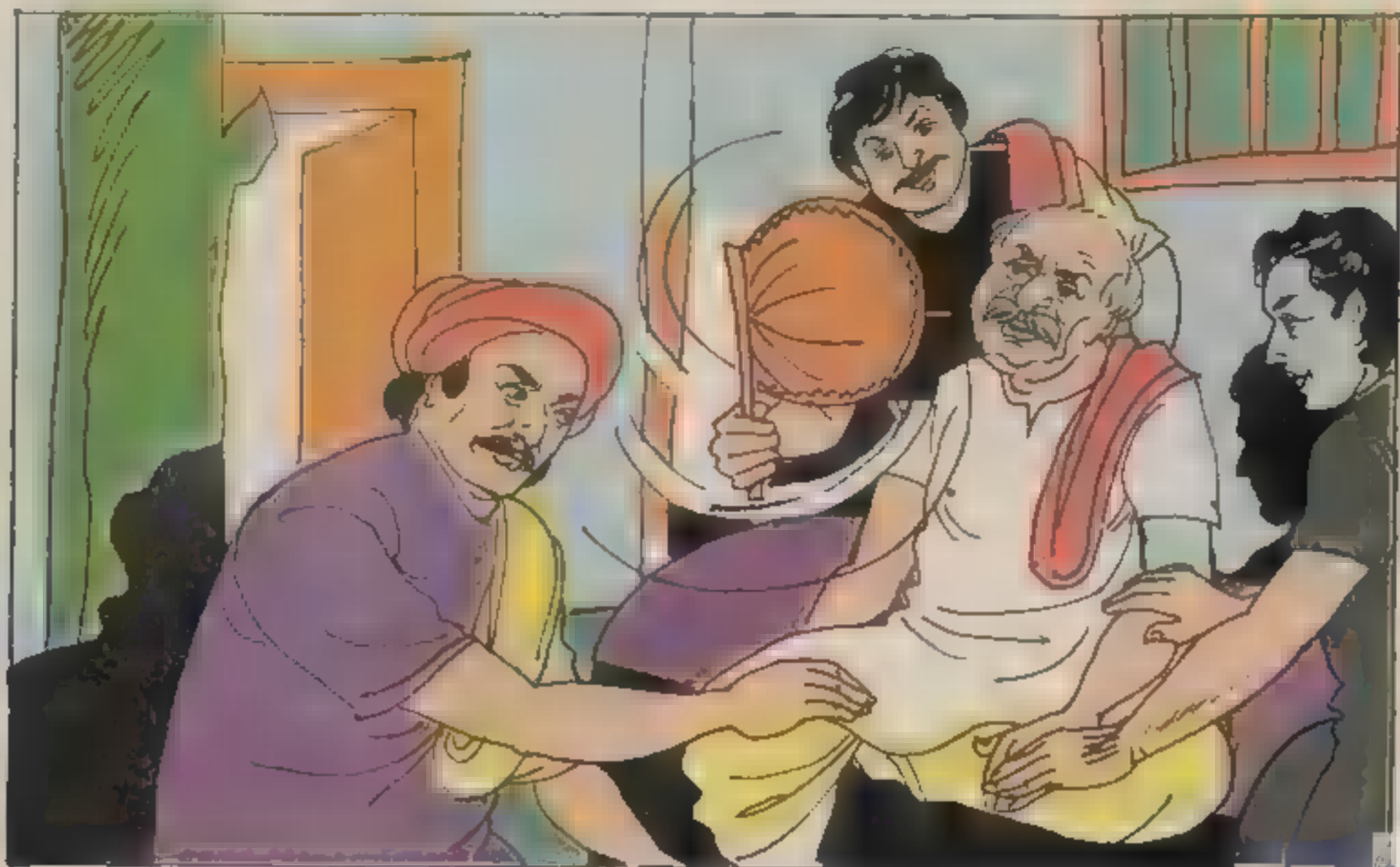
So the poor old man soon saw better days. Sitting on a cushion on

the great wooden chest, an impressive key dangling from a chain around his neck, he continued to receive all the warm attention and flattery of his near and dear ones. In fact, all the three brothers and their wives vied with one another to win his favour.

After a year of comfortable living, the old man was found dead one morning. The news spread and many of his friends and admirers arrived to pay him their tributes. Among them was the shoemaker.

"Can we open the chest now?" the sons asked the shoemaker.

"What's the hurry? Let his funeral be over! Besides, I repeat, I don't think you deserve the necklaces. I don't know why on earth he got them made. Now that he's no more, its mystery will never be unravelled. A pity!" said the shoemaker.



The funeral was done in a decent way.

Then the chest was placed before the headman of the village. News had spread and the curious villagers had already gathered to see the treasure the good father had left behind for his unworthy sons.

"Young men! I command you to share the content equally, that is, one necklace for one. No quarrel. One necklace may be big, another small. But you put your hands into the box together and pick up one each and thank your luck. Do you agree?" asked the headman solemnly. The brothers agreed.

The headman opened the rusted lock and raised the heavy lid with much difficulty. The sons were on tip-toe, agog with excitement, hoping

to find necklaces of glittering gold and precious stones.

Alas, to their horror, what they brought out were old tattered shoes woven into three garlands! At first puzzled, the spectators soon burst into laughter. The headman too found it difficult to control himself.

"Didn't I say that they were unique? Didn't I say that you do not deserve them?" said the shoemaker in a most innocent style.

"Alas, why should he treasure a boxful of trash?" asked some villagers.

"Trash? Maybe trash for you, but it was a boxful of happiness for our dear departed friend!" commented the headman.

The crowd laughed again, for they understood well what their leader meant.



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MAHANTESH C. MORABAD



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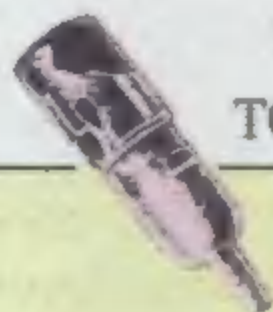


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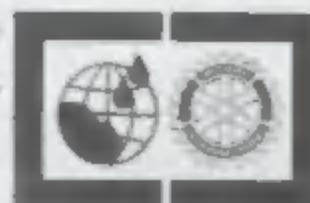


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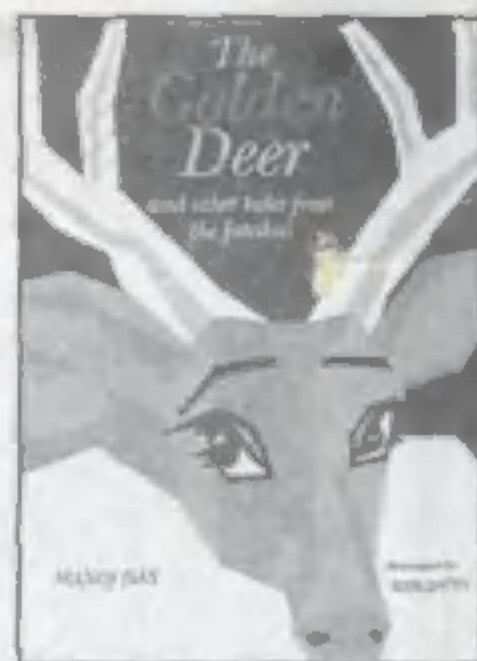




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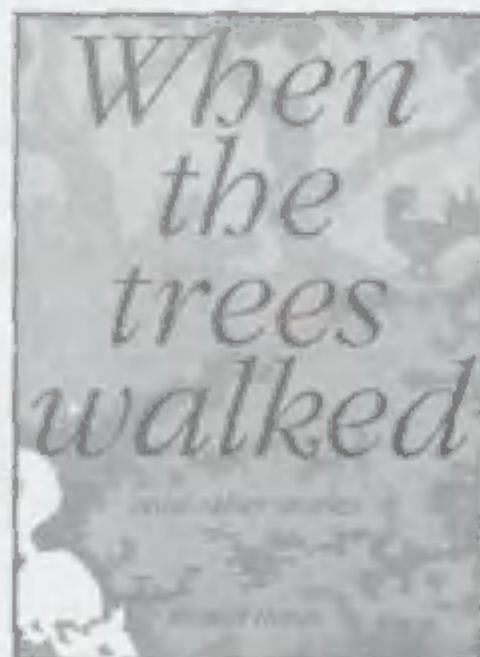


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